TEACHING INTERMEDIATES IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

ALMA STANLEY SHERIDAN

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Teaching Intermediates in the Church School

By
ALMA STANLEY SHERIDAN

A Textbook in the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum, outlined and approved by the International Council of Religious Education

SPECIALIZATION SERIES

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

In the field of leadership training a large number of evangelical denominations and State councils are co-operating through the International Council of Religious Education in a systematic effort to prepare leaders and teachers more adequately for the responsibilities of Christian leadership and teaching. Among the objectives in leadership training adopted by the Committee on Education of the International Council are the following: (1) that the teachers and leaders in our church schools shall be as well prepared, grade by grade, as are the teachers in the public schools; (2) that the minimum training required of teachers and leaders shall be at least that represented by a Standard Leadership Diploma.

The Standard Leadership Training Curriculum, as planned by the International Council, is organized on the basis of subject units of not less than ten lessons each. The successful completion of the study of twelve of these units, as a minimum, is necessary to secure a Standard Leadership Diploma. Of the twelve units, nine are required and three are elective. Of the nine required units six are general units and three are specialization units. Specialization depends upon the department of the church school in which the teacher or leader is engaged in service. TEACHING INTERMEDIATES IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL is in the field of Intermediate Department specialization. Intermediate materials and methods is one of three required specialization units for teachers and leaders

of Intermediates, and this textbook has been prepared in fulfillment of the requirements for this subject. The textbook deals primarily with the work of the teacher and leader of a class or group of early adolescents. It treats, among other topics, the ways of developing a Christian motive for all activity; principles for building a balanced and adequate class program as a part of the age-group program; the selection and use of curriculum materials; the relation of pupil and teacher, and ways of obtaining pupil participation.

The textbooks of the Specialization Series are prepared under the supervision of the Editorial and Educational Committee representing the denominations that co-operate in the Teacher Training Publishing Association. Editors, educational secretaries, and publishers of these denominations, through this medium of co-operation, produce the textbooks of the Specialization Series especially for the use of the various denominational and interdenominational agencies of training. Textbook writers are chosen on the basis of experience and training in the field of specialized service of which the respective textbooks treat. It is believed that TEACHING INTERMEDIATES IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL will be found to be well adapted for use as a textbook in the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum. It will also be found to serve the purpose of a book for reading and general reference on the important subject of which it treats.

For the Teacher Training Publishing Association,

WADE CRAWFORD BARCLAY, Chairman,

Editorial and Educational Committee.

Chicago, Illinois.

CHAPTER I

WHY WE TEACH

WHY are you teaching? Put in this general way the question may not call forth an immediate response. But phrase it concretely in terms of what you hope to do for Mary and Helen, for William and Henry, and you are ready with an answer at once.

Answers of some teachers. The following statements were among a number received at a conference of teachers of Intermediates in response to the question, "What are some of the things you hope to accomplish by your teaching?"

Said one teacher: "The thing I am most anxious to do is to get my pupils to become regular church attendants. They seem to like Sunday school well enough. They are well-behaved and attentive. But so far I have been unable to persuade them of the importance of going to church."

Another teacher was interested in the prayer life of his pupils. "It is only within the last few weeks that my attention has been directed to the need of my boys for help in the matter of prayer," he confessed. "My pupils all come from good Christian homes and are manly young fellows, so I did not think that I needed to say much about the question of prayer. Then one day, quite by accident it seemed, my conversation with one of the boys who was my companion while returning from a class hike

turned to the subject of prayer. With some hesitation he admitted that the only reason he prayed was because he thought he ought to. He felt that it was a rather burdensome duty. Later I made it my business to talk with some of the other members of my class regarding prayer and found that this one boy's experience was typical rather than unusual. So I am giving this problem a first place in my thinking and in my plans for teaching. If in the next quarter I can help these boys learn something of the real meaning of prayer, I shall feel well repaid for my work."

The next teacher to speak revealed a special interest in what we might call practical ethics. She was a young woman in charge of her first class of Intermediate girls and spoke, therefore, with some hesitation. "I don't know whether you will consider the difficulties with which I am concerned very fundamental," she said, almost apologetically, "but they are real and perplexing enough. Indeed, I sometimes wonder if any group of young people could be more perplexing than a class of twelve-year-old girls. You must not think that I mean by this that there is anything seriously wrong with my girls. I am sure that they are as fine as you would meet anywhere, but there is some little thing about every one of them that I wish I could change. Gwendolyn, for instance, is a fine girl in many ways, but given to exaggeration. Then there is Mary, who is so anxious to appear up to date and smart that both her dress and manner make her disagreeably conspicuous. With Ellen the difficulty comes from the use which she makes of a fine sense of humor

and a gift of dramatic ability. Ellen mimics the personal peculiarities of others with scant heed to their wounded feelings. I wish I could get her to show a little more consideration. My most perplexing problem, however, is Hazel. Always pleasant and agreeable, she takes no responsibility of any kind seriously. I have tried giving her light tasks in the hope that she would be ashamed to fail. I have tried assigning responsibilities involving the comfort and happiness of others, thinking that surely she would not let anyone else suffer because of her carelessness. But neither plan has proved effective. So, the correction of this fault is another of my objectives for the coming year."

Such are the objectives which these teachers of Intermediates had set for themselves. Differing greatly because the pupils themselves differ in many respects from each other, these aims are alike in this one respect, that they are definite and concrete. Each one is concerned with the development of some particular habit or attitude on the part of a particular boy or girl.

Larger and Smaller Aims

Validity of limited objectives. Indeed, so definite and so narrow are these objectives that one is at once moved to ask regarding them, "Are they valid teaching aims? Should not any statement of aim be phrased in terms of the larger teaching purpose? Is it enough to be interested in making Hazel dependable, and Ellen thoughtful of others, or should the teacher always be working for something bigger and more inclusive?"

It is indeed necessary that we should work for the larger objectives. We must have more than a collection of isolated habits. We need to work for rounded, organized, balanced life. But we have probably erred seriously in our teaching in the past by making our aims so general as to neglect the concrete and definite elements that go to make up the total objective. Our most competent leaders in religious education to-day believe that if we were to revise our curriculum materials as a whole, making aims more specific and more manageable, a real advantage would be gained.

The importance of having the aim definitely related to actual pupil needs is illustrated by the following incident: A teacher of Intermediate girls sought advice from her minister regarding the teaching of the good Samaritan story to a class of Intermediate girls. Before proceeding to make suggestions the minister asked: "What reason have you for teaching this story to these young folks? Is there something that can be accomplished, some change that can be brought about in their lives, by the use of this narrative?" To which the young woman replied, "My purpose here is the same as in all my work with these girls—to get them to accept Jesus." Interpreted broadly this statement of purpose would have been adequate. Accepting Jesus involves, among other things, the acceptance of the social teachings of the story of the good Samaritan and their realization in conduct. But the minister's observation of other lessons taught by this teacher led him to suspect that just here was the cause of her difficulty. She had failed to break up her task

into its component parts. She was thinking of it in general terms and forgetting that it involved the development of certain specific habits in the lives of her girls. And this was the reason why her teaching was not as productive of results as it should have been.

The practice of Jesus. The point is further illuminated by a study of the method of Jesus. Always he seems to have been conscious of definite objectives. Nowhere is there lack of evidence of clarity in his purposes. In each situation he knew exactly what it was that needed to be done. In the case of the rich young ruler a changed attitude toward money was the essential need; in the case of Zacchæus a new attitude toward those whom he served. Conscious always of his larger purpose to reveal the will of the Father and to bring men's lives into harmony with that will, he worked toward these definite and clear-cut ends.

A test of success. It is clear, then, that the teacher who holds rigidly to the principle of phrasing his aim in terms of actual pupil needs does not necessarily abandon his larger purposes. Rather does this course involve a careful and constant examination of them. It is impossible to formulate a narrow aim unless one is clear as to the implications of the larger objectives. The most successful teacher is one who never ceases to ponder the question, "Just what does it mean to bring life into harmony with the ideals of Jesus?" He is continually asking what habits, what attitudes are consistent with those ideals. And because he is so sensitive to the implications of his larger purpose

he is keenly conscious of the smaller definite tasks to which he must address himself.

The Systematic Discovery of Pupil Needs

The search for real needs. It becomes apparent that one of the first steps in the teaching process is the location of the needs of the pupils. And this is a phase of the work which cannot be passed over quickly. Real needs are not usually discovered by mere accident. Anyone who knows a group of Intermediate boys or girls ever so slightly may be able to point to at least a few undesirable traits, but this does not necessarily mean that real needs have been located. More often than not, apparent needs are merely symptomatic. They indicate that something is wrong, but do not reveal what the trouble is, and permanent results cannot be effected by treating symptoms. A more fundamental process is required. Teachers can render real service to their pupils only when they locate the root of their difficulties.

This point was brought to the attention of a teacher of Intermediate boys when he attempted to deal with the boisterous conduct of one of his pupils. Interpreting the behavior as a deliberate attempt to disturb the class, he administered a punishment calculated to shame the culprit. But the boy's reaction was quite the reverse of what the teacher had expected. This was readily understood when it was learned that the original misconduct had been caused by embarrassment and that further embarrassment would naturally provide a greater provocation to misbehave. The boy was passing

through a period of rapid growth, when grace and physical control are likely to be conspicuously lacking. His inability to enter the classroom without crashing into the furniture or stumbling over someone annoyed him probably more than his teacher. But of course he did not wish to show his embarrassment, so he laughed at his blunders and tried to act as if he had meant to be noisy. The teacher's efforts to shame him only made him more self-conscious and consequently more awkward. A better response was obtained only after the teacher changed his method to meet the real and not the apparent need.

Early adolescents often misunderstand. Wrong interpretations of conduct may occur at any period of life, but they are especially common during early adolescence, when the individual is so different from what he has been during childhood and is yet quite unlike what he will be when maturity is reached. Often the conduct of the Intermediate boy or girl seems to admit of no consistent explanation. Instances could be multiplied in which what has seemed irreverence has been embarrassment, what seemed indifference lack of self-confidence, what seemed irresponsibility an inability to hold an easily fatigued body to a task, and what seemed disregard for others an almost unavoidable absorption in self.

The teacher's necessity of study. How, then, are real pupil needs to be located? Only by the slow and patient method of careful study of the conduct of boys and girls in the light of what educational psychology has to say regarding the forces

which play upon the personality of the individual at this period of life.

Physiological changes. According to students of the problem many of the difficulties of early adolescence have their source in the rather significant physiological changes which are taking place at the time. There is probably no need to consider these changes in any detail in a study of this kind, nor to comment on them more than is necessary to remind the teacher of the importance of considering them when attempting to locate the real needs of his pupils. These physiological changes explain much that would otherwise be hard to understand. The fact that the body is hard to control, that lung capacity is increased, that bursts of energy are of comparatively short duration because the heart has not yet adjusted to other phases of physiological growth, that nervous stability may have been interfered with because of glandular developments—all this makes it less easy for the individual to conform to the conventions of social life and to get along with other people.

Intellectual development. But growth is not limited to the physical phase of life. Intellectually the individual makes a good deal of progress during this period. Those who find it difficult to understand how intellectual growth could ever be interpreted as anything other than what it is, will be interested in the experience of a high-school teacher who admitted that since she had watched her own nieces and nephews pass through the early adolescent period she had begun to see some of her pupils in a new light. "I recall one boy in particular

toward whom I feel I have been unjust," this teacher confessed. "He was always asking questions which were irrelevant to the subject in hand. I thought he was merely trying to draw the attention of the class to himself and perhaps also to interfere with the lesson. I am beginning to wonder if he were not really in earnest. He was a bright boy, and I can see, now that I understand early adolescents better, how all these problems may have suggested themselves to him."

Many teachers in the church school could instance similar incidents from their own experiences. Boys and girls ask perplexing questions, not because they desire to tease, as their self-conscious expressions sometimes seem to indicate, but because they are really in search of satisfying answers. Expressions of religious doubt may be made for the purpose of annoying the teacher, but more often than not they indicate that boys and girls have intellectual needs which are not being met.

Emotional attitudes. Then, too, there are certain emotional attitudes which contribute to making the Intermediate hard to understand. Early adolescent boys and girls may be dominated by either of two rather prominent motives: namely, the desire to obtain recognition of their own powers by all with whom they associate, and the desire to win the approval of their own social group. Some students of psychology question whether there is much that is new about either of these early adolescent attitudes. They feel that they have been present during earlier years and only now become conspicuous because developing powers make possible a greater

degree of self-assertion. Whenever they appear, there can be no question but that they are present now in a marked degree and must be reckoned with.

An interesting illustration of the desire for recognition comes from the experience of a department superintendent. Chafing under adult leadership, the boys and girls asked for the privilege of planning the services of worship themselves. Their request was granted, and on the Saturday night before the first service under student control the superintendent was surprised to receive a telephone call from the president of the student council asking if he would mind saying what items ought to be included in the service. So the arrangement continued. Although the responsibility now rested upon the pupils, the services were modeled upon those which had been held under the old régime, and the superintendent was called upon to make suggestions in all emergencies. But there was this difference: the boys and girls now felt they were managing the work themselves. They were at least free to plan and to have something original, even though they did not always do so.

Environmental conditions. Other difficulties have their root in or at least are intensified by environmental conditions. The home, perhaps, or the school does not understand the early adolescent urge for self-direction and as a result traits harmless enough in themselves develop into rather serious faults. The Intermediate's world enlarges rapidly. He is pushed into responsibilities for which he is not ready. New contacts are formed which make him aware that the world is a very different place

from what he had supposed it to be. And the process of adjustment is not a comfortable one.

A Preliminary Classification of Needs

For purposes of convenience early adolescent needs of the greatest significance to the religious educator may be classified into four groups.

The problem of belief. In one group may be listed all problems having to do with the matter of belief. It is this aspect of early adolescent need that the teacher referred to in the beginning of this chapter will have to consider if he is to develop habits of prayer in his pupils. The difficulty of these boys was one of belief or creed. They had an inadequate understanding of the value of prayer and did not therefore find the practice of prayer a satisfying one.

There are several aspects of this matter of belief to which teachers of Intermediates may quite properly turn their attention. One large source of difficulty for early adolescents is an inadequate conception of the nature of God and of his relation to man. Because they do not know what God is like they are kept away from him. Because they do not understand what God's purposes for them are or how those purposes are to be discovered they are unable to bring their lives into harmony with the divine plan. Because they have mistaken conceptions of sin and of how it may be overcome they are worried and unhappy.

Still another phase of the problem of belief with which many early adolescents need help is that relating to the use of the Bible and the practices of

organized Christianity. Such questions as "What is the Bible? Of what value is it? How does it help mankind? Why should we go to church? How are we helped by baptism, communion, ritualistic worship?" are stumbling-blocks for many Intermediate boys and girls who are keen enough to realize that there should be a consistent reason back of the practices recommended to the Christian, but are not able to discover those reasons for themselves. Nor should they be expected, unaided, to do so.

The problem of social relationships. A second large group of difficulties are those having to do with social relationships. The fact that many factors contribute to make social adjustments difficult for the early adolescent makes it necessary that the social aspect of the religious life be stressed in the classes for Intermediates in the church school. If the boy or girl is not to become narrowly individualistic, religious training must at this time lay the foundations for participation in the great brotherhood of humanity, which includes not only members of one's own family circle, neighbors, and friends, but human beings of every walk of life and of every race that God has made.

The problem of social privileges. In a third group may be listed those problems which have to do with another aspect of social living, the use of the privileges of social life. Problems of this kind are multiplied as life becomes more complex. The young person of to-day is confronted with a host of opportunities for work and play. A multitude of interests clamor for his attention. Splendid schools offer him the advantage of study; cleverly written

advertisements tempt him to recreational centers. In many cases changing home conditions give him increasing freedom from supervision and a more generous allowance of spending money than was possible a few years ago. Satisfactory adjustment to environmental conditions at this critical time of life can hardly be expected if boys and girls are thrown into the situation without help or preparation. Because of their bearing upon character these problems having to do with the use of privilege should come in for a fair share of attention by teachers in the church school.

The problem of life commitment. Finally, there are the questions relating to the matter of life commitment. In a broad sense all the problems mentioned above belong here. When an individual decides to bring his life into harmony with the principles of Jesus he assumes certain obligations in regard to his relations with his fellows and his adjustment to his environment. Nor can he realize his highest possibilities as a Christian if his creed is inadequate or inconsistent. But being religious involves something more than the development of certain attitudes and the solution of certain difficulties. One cannot be said to be truly Christian unless all of life is organized around the purpose of serving Jesus and becoming like him. So we have in a fourth group all such questions as "Why should the question of life commitment be faced by the Intermediate boy and girl? What kind of lessons best prepare the pupils for taking such a step? What should be done for those who do not respond to the appeal for life consecration?"

For Further Study

1. A teacher of Intermediates who was asked by his superintendent to state why he was planning to teach a certain lesson on the following Sunday exclaimed, "Why, that is the lesson for next Sunday. Isn't that a good enough reason for teaching it?" If you had been in the superintendent's place how would you have regarded this answer, and what would you have said in reply to it?

2. The following is a statement of aim for the teaching of the good Samaritan story to fourteen-year-old girls. Comment on it, indicating what you feel to be its good points, and suggesting how it might be improved:

(a) To present family loyalty as an ideal for to-day.

(b) To develop an attitude of fidelity toward friends, especially those of one's own family.

(c) To cultivate a feeling of friendly appreciation of fine qualities of those of other races.

3. The following aims are taken from lessons prepared for use with Intermediate boys and girls. Do you feel that they touch upon real needs in the lives of most Intermediates? In the case of at least four of them describe a boy or girl who would be most helped by such a lesson.

(a) To show that service is an essential element in friendship.

(b) To inspire boys and girls with a sense of the significance of their own lives.

(c) To teach the necessity for self-control.

(d) To show the value of faithfulness in little things.

(e) To emphasize the debt of the world to its great leaders.

(f) To show the power of an unwavering aim and the effectiveness of steadfastness.

(g) To develop a habit of respecting the opinions of others.

4. Write out an aim to be used in teaching each of the following stories to your class of Intermediate boys and girls:

(a) Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

(b) The story of Joseph.

(c) Jeroboam's treatment of the emissaries from the north.

(d) Nehemiah rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem.

5. What do the following incidents tell you about Intermediate boys and girls? Of what value to teachers in the church school is the ability to appreciate the real nature of the difficulty in each case?

(a) A class of twelve-year-old girls have become so interested in their new teacher that they devote the entire worship period to bestowing attentions upon her. Those who sit near her vie with each other in patting her arms, laying their cheeks against hers, and toying with her jewelry, while those farther away are engrossed in writing notes and passing them to her. These activities make it impossible either for their teacher and themselves, or for any others who sit near enough to see them, to profit as they should from the service.

(b) A class of first-year Intermediate boys find the lessons interesting, but refuse to do the hand-

work, although it is of the same kind as that in which they took great pride last year.

(c) Jane's mother complains that a great change has recently come over her twelve-year-old daughter. "Jane used to be very reliable," she says, "but now she has become so careless that if I trust her even to dust a room, she is sure to break something."

(d) While each of the classes in the department entered enthusiastically into the project of preparing Christmas baskets, only those who were carefully supervised had their baskets ready at the required time.

(e) At the close of a memorial service for one of the former teachers in the Sunday school one of the Intermediate boys confided to his teacher that he had always been puzzled about death and had wished someone would talk to him about it. Yet the teacher had frequently offered the boys the privilege of conferences and this lad had been one of the few who had never availed themselves of the privilege.

(f) An Intermediate boy who had refused to act as department president gave as his reason the fact that he had not yet started to wear long trousers and therefore did not care to preside.

6. Write out a list of all the problems of which you are keenly conscious that you are now facing in your work with Intermediate boys or girls. If you are not now teaching, make such a list from your memory of past experiences or from your observation of the teaching of others.

7. Analyze these problems in the light of your knowledge of the psychology of adolescence with a

view to determining what are the actual needs of your pupils.

8. Arrange these pupil needs in the order of their importance.

9. From these needs make a statement of aim for your work with your pupils for the following twelve months, stating what you actually hope to accomplish in terms of the development of specific habits and attitudes.

10. Select six lessons from any textbook designed for use with Intermediates. Examine each one carefully, and make a list of the definite pupil needs that each lesson seems designed to meet.

References for Supplementary Reading

Psychology of the Junior High School Pupil, Pechstein and McGregor, Chapters I, II, III, VII, IX.

The High School Age, King, Chapter II-IX.

Girlhood and Character, Moxcey, Chapters I, IV, V.

Psychology of Early Adolescence, Mudge, Chapters I-VIII.

Social Theory of Religious Education, Coe, Chapter V.

Intermediate Method in the Church School, McKibben, Chapter II.

Teaching the Youth of the Church, Maus, Chapter I.

Handbook for Workers with Young People, Thompson, Chapters I-III.

CHAPTER II

THE BUILDING OF A REASONABLE FAITH

Creeds are not now esteemed as highly as was the case a few generations ago. Indeed, many people declare that it does not matter what you believe as long as you live a good life. In support of their position they point out that it is quite possible to be a learned theologian and at the same time not a Christian in daily living, and that many very saintly people have known little theology. They are inclined to say that we had better not worry too much about our own beliefs or those of our pupils, that all of us might better give attention to our conduct.

Undoubtedly, there is some justification for the contention. In times past there has been much fruitless argument over creeds and, as a consequence, insufficient emphasis on good living. We make a mistake, however, when we interpret this fact as meaning that it is necessary to choose between the alternative of creed and good conduct. It is quite possible to give adequate attention to belief and still give due consideration to problems of conduct. The fact that creeds have been overemphasized does not justify a neglect of the value of beliefs now.

Importance of a reasonable faith. For creeds do matter. A reasonable faith makes a solid founda-

tion for a deep and satisfying religious experience. On the other hand, religious experience that rests upon a mistaken conception of God and his relation to man is likely to break down and leave the individual without a fine reserve of spiritual power at the very moment when such help is most needed.

The difficulty is frequently encountered during early adolescence. Fierce temptations present themselves. Perplexing situations arise. Boys and girls need the assurance that God is facing these difficulties with them. But many of them are conscious of no such assurance. Their conceptions of God and his relation to them are vague and confusing. They have not thought through the fundamental questions of belief. When a crisis comes they hesitate to call upon one regarding whom they are perplexed. Of the great sources of Christian inspiration, prayer and reading of the Scriptures, they do not avail themselves because they are uncertain regarding how they help and how they should be used. The problem is a serious one. Unless boys and girls are guided in the development of a reasonable faith, religion will not prove a vital source of spiritual enrichment in their lives.

Ideas of God

False conceptions of God. The most important element in the creed of an Intermediate pupil is his conception of God. One young person thinks of God as a stern lawgiver exacting "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and is afraid of him. His fear has this value, perhaps, that it keeps him from wrongdoing, but it has the serious disadvan-

tage that it also keeps him from God. It crowds out love and fellowship. Another thinks of God as a selfish and arbitrary sort of tyrant who demands worship and church attendance simply because these practices please him. As a consequence the individual does not receive the spiritual enrichment from these privileges of the Christian life that those derive who understand better why God desires men to worship him. Because the idea of God is basic to all other religious conceptions it is one of the first which teachers of Intermediates will wish to discuss with their pupils.

Ideas of God commonly held. Before considering the problem of how a satisfying conception of God may be built up, teachers will find it worth while to examine the concepts of God already held by their pupils. Practically every Intermediate boy or girl has already some idea of God, though not all of them find it easy to put this idea into words. In many cases these conceptions are so out of harmony with what the Bible, and particularly the Gospels, tell us about the nature of God that certain fallacies in them must be explained away if a consistent and adequate conception is to be built up. Only greater confusion results when a pupil tries to add a new and better idea on to one which is in part erroneous.

Of the unsatisfying conceptions of God commonly held by Intermediates the most prevalent is the idea of the Deity as simply a man somewhat enlarged. That many boys and girls have this conception of God is due in part to their immaturity. It is easier to think of God after the physical likeness of man than to conceive of a spiritual being. But it is im-

possible to "worship him in spirit and in truth" unless we think of him as Spirit. Good educational policy, therefore, calls for a definite effort to stimulate the developing mental powers toward the building up of such a concept.

Again we find that some of the pupils think of God as of one with whom they may drive shrewd bargains. Sometimes their thinking takes the form of the expression "Righteousness pays." Not infrequently do we find this conception shared by people of mature years who believe that the contributions which they make to the work of the church always come back with increase. This, of course, does not fit the facts. Often people have contributed from their meager resources and have been just that much poorer financially. There is no assurance that generosity invariably tends to the increase of earthly possessions. Furthermore, contributions made in the hope that they will bring material benefit to the donors are unworthy to be placed before God. The whole matter of relationship with him ought to be put upon a distinctly higher plane. The joy which comes from helping one's fellow men and sharing with the heavenly Father in the building of the Kingdom ought to be a sufficient reward for the making of gifts.

A further serious fault in the thinking of many boys and girls, as well as that of adults, is the idea that God is far removed from the affairs of daily life. In times of great emergency it is easy to think of his participation in all particulars and aspects of life. Few human beings seem to realize the immediacy of his presence in such a fashion that

they are able to speak with Paul of him in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." The tendency is to think of God as one who created the universe and established its laws and is now but remotely related to it, instead of finding in all the love and joy and good will of life the manifestation of his presence.

The origin of these ideas. A study of the origin of these conceptions will throw some light upon the problem of developing more satisfying ones. Manifestly, many of these ideas have grown out of teaching received during childhood. They reflect the anthropomorphic imagery with which parents and teachers often clothe the idea of the Deity. They are the result of a deliberate effort to make clear to immature minds ideas that are difficult to grasp, even for those who have reached maturity, an effort which was responsible for the inclusion in the illustrated Bibles of a few years ago of pictorial representations of the Deity as an all-seeing eye, and which, more recently, has built up in the mind of childhood a picture of God which resembles that of a glorified Santa Claus.

Failure to provide for intellectual growth. There is a real question whether these conceptions are suitable even for children. Certainly, there can be no doubt that they create serious problems if carried over into early adolescence. The failure of teachers and parents to provide for the growth of religious ideas as intellectual powers develop may, therefore, be listed as a second cause of adolescent difficulties in regard to the conception of God. No one would consent to letting a child enter the ado-

lescent period equipped only with such concepts of number or with such a limited control of language as he had before he left kindergarten. Yet such a policy has been followed quite frequently in regard to religion. In too many cases the teaching of later childhood has not contributed to the development of the idea of God. The boy or girl of twelve has the same answer to the questions: "Who is God? Where does he live? What is he like?" that the child of six knew. Whether or not this answer was satisfactory in childhood, it should not be expected to meet the needs of early adolescence.

The recapitulation theory. Now, failure to minister adequately to the religious needs of the different periods of development may not be attributed to negligence or ignorance alone. For some years past educational procedure has been dominated by a theory which holds that the needs of childhood are best satisfied by the activities and ideas of primitive man. This theory points for support to certain parallels between the development of the human being and that of the race. It interprets the fact that boys in the late Junior and early Intermediate years like to build shacks for themselves, and go about in gangs marauding the shacks of other groups much as savages used to do, to mean that the most helpful kind of education is that which is patterned upon primitive life. This is known as the "recapitulation theory."

Although this theory has been abandoned by most educational theorists, it is still responsible for much of the present practice of our schools. It has lent justification to the policy of some teachers of

religion who deliberately foster the development in the minds of boys and girls of ideas which they realize will have to be abandoned later. Those who follow this practice do so because they feel that these conceptions minister to a real need in the life of the boy and girl and that when outgrown they will readily be cast aside. Others who have seen only too clearly in the religious doubts of adolescence the havoc wrought by such procedure are quite convinced that it is a mistake. They feel that it is not only possible but desirable to provide during early life for a basis upon which all later conceptions may be built without the abandonment of any outworn ideas. They favor the giving to the children of only such conceptions as are in harmony with the best of present-day thinking.

The God of the New Testament. In developing the idea of God it seems wise, therefore, to begin with the best of modern thought. This means presenting New Testament rather than Old Testament conceptions. All that was finest in Old Testament ideas of God is to be found in the New Testament, much of it refined and reinterpreted by Jesus. The experiences of the early Christians as they are recorded in the New Testament are illuminating also, because they help us to see how a faith built upon Jesus' revelation of the Father was able to carry such men as Paul and others of his contemporaries through persecution and martyrdom.

Jesus' conception of God is well adapted for discussion with boys and girls because the word by which he so frequently characterized God is one with which they are thoroughly familiar. In

describing God as a Father Jesus interpreted him, no doubt, in terms of the ideal experience of the human relationship between father and son. In his own boyhood home in Nazareth, as well as in the Jewish homes of his day, he saw exemplified the love of a father for his child which he pictured so beautifully in the parables. Nor is the experience limited to any particular time and place. To-day as well as in New Testament times we have splendid evidence of the love of a father for his child. The finer our experience of this love has been, the more clearly can we picture the bond between God and humanity, for God's love is immeasurably greater than that of any human parent.

But we must not leave the impression that God's love for his children, like that of some human parents, is untempered by wisdom. Jesus is very clear that God is intolerant of wrongdoing. In his own treatment of the money-changers in the Temple he reflected the attitude of the Father toward those who would exploit others for their own selfish ends.

What the Old Testament teaches about God. A study of certain parts of the Old Testament will strengthen the conception growing out of the study of Jesus' idea of God, and will, in addition, help the boys and girls to understand the background out of which the conception of Jesus grew. For Jesus in his boyhood became familiar with the prophets as well as with the law, and his reaction to both is interesting. With the legalism and formality in which the religion of his day was enmeshed Jesus had little patience. But there is evidence that he

knew and loved the Scriptures and that the words of the prophets became a part of the thinking of the growing boy.

The study of the prophets may be made very interesting to Intermediate boys and girls if organized around the problem of discovering what particular phase of the personality of God each prophet particularly emphasized. The book of Hosea becomes full of meaning and beauty when it is pointed out that this prophet was trying to help people appreciate God's great love for human folk. The shrewd way in which Amos proclaimed God as a God of justice, and presented his charges against evildoers cannot fail to interest Intermediates, as will also the beautiful imagery with which Isaiah clothed his message of Jehovah's purity. It is unfortunate that in times past this prophetic material has received such scant attention in our church schools. It may be presented just as interestingly as the more frequently used historical material, and its teaching value is certainly vastly greater.

When the teacher is sure that the pupils have thought through their most urgent problems regarding the nature of God, he may consider with them the question of certain Old Testament conceptions of God which seem out of harmony with the pronouncements of Jesus and the prophets. There is a twofold value in dealing with this question. In the first place it is important that boys and girls understand why there are inconsistencies in the Bible. Some of them are already aware that such inconsistencies exist, and often some pupil less reticent than his associates will raise such a question as, "Why

did God order the Israelites to kill all the people in the towns which they captured?" So the problem is brought before the class whether the teacher wishes it or not. Even where it has not already arisen it is often wise to raise it. It is bound to appear sooner or later and may create serious difficulties when it does come if there is no one to explain it satisfactorily.

A second reason for studying this material is that it contributes to a realization of the way in which the idea of God has been revealed to man. The revelation has been a progressive one. People of early Bible times did not have as fine an appreciation of God as did those of a later period. Step by step one great teacher after another helped the Israelites to a better conception of God. Materials which present the earlier conceptions are valuable in demonstrating the progress in religious insight which those of the later periods made.

Finding God in personal experience. The convictions of the pupils will be greatly strengthened if the study of biblical materials is illuminated by their own experiences. It was pointed out above that people learn to appreciate the Fatherhood of God from their experiences as children of human parents. They learn to understand God also from the experience of loving and protecting someone else. Indeed, it is a real question if this latter type of experience does not give a much finer appreciation of God's love than does the former. Hosea, it will be remembered, learned by this method. Out of his own great love for his erring wife grew his fine conception of God's love for humanity.

There are other types of experiences also which contribute to an understanding of the Deity. The psalmist looked up into the heavens and saw God. Many an Intermediate pupil, as he looks with newly awakened senses at the world of nature and of men, like the men of old, may come to see God in his creation.

In suggesting that boys and girls be encouraged to learn from their own experience as well as from the great sources of Christian information it is not the intention to urge the development of an attitude that each individual may be a law unto himself and rely on his own judgment alone. That would be granting a freedom which may be intrusted to no individual, old or young. Wisely used, however, the method of learning from one's own experience will help boys and girls to develop real conviction. This is why one teacher answered a pupil who had asked, "How do you learn there is a God?" by telling of a time when God had helped him, rather than by referring to the experience of some Bible character. He wanted the boy to know that anyone for himself may experience God. That he was wise in his method was demonstrated when, after a few moments of reflection, the boy admitted that he too had often felt that there must be a God because that was the only way in which people could have got the intellects which made possible the marvelous inventions and discoveries of the centuries. This boy's conception was doubly valuable because it was in part at least the result of his own thinking. Like the men of old, he had seen God, and his faith, like theirs, could remain unshaken.

Prayer

Mistaken ideas of prayer. A second important conception is that regarding the nature of prayer. Many adolescent boys and girls think of prayer as petition only. Prayer to them is simply a way of obtaining favors. Obviously, this view is incomplete. Prayer includes petition, as Jesus taught in the prayer which he gave to the disciples, but petition is not the only nor even the dominant element in that prayer. The Lord's Prayer begins with adoration. And it is when the elements of adoration and thanksgiving are lacking that the prayer life loses its virility. A deep human friendship never develops between two human beings one of whom does nothing but ask favors of the other. While friendship usually involves the granting of favors, fellowship, and not the giving or receiving of gifts, is always the real basis of the relationship. So too in that richer friendship between God and man petition must be a subordinate feature.

Another mistaken idea regarding prayer is that it is simply a duty to be performed because it will bring good fortune. This idea has much in common with that discussed above except that it conceives the benefits in more general terms. The point of view is expressed in the following statement of an adolescent girl: "Oh, I'd be afraid not to say my prayers; I'd be sure I would never have any luck." The idea that prayer is a rite which brings the good will of the gods is a pagan one and should not find a place in the thinking of Christian people.

It is necessary also that certain misconceptions

regarding the nature of the help to be obtained through prayer be cleared up. Many people are like the girl who prayed for success in an examination for which she was poorly prepared. This girl really believed that if she prayed earnestly enough, God would use his power to help her achieve a success not merited by her efforts. Experience has demonstrated time and again that God does not relieve the individual of responsibilities which rightly belong to him, neither does he set aside natural laws, but works through them. He does not help a schoolboy by suddenly enabling him to solve problems the underlying principles of which he has not grasped. Rather does he help the boy to find patience to do the work necessary for the mastering of his difficulties, courage to face disappointment, and a willingness to try as many times as are necessary to achieve success. He does not help a timid girl by stopping a storm but by giving courage and self-control to face the situation calmly.

What the Bible teaches about prayer. Again when we examine the biblical materials dealing with the problem of prayer we find that the New Testament materials present the loftier conception. The experience of Jesus in Gethsemane throws a flood of illumination upon the question of the power of prayer. Yet this experience did not spare him the agony of the cross. It did enable him to carry his cross bravely and calmly. As he walked the road to Golgotha he remained the only self-controlled figure in the situation. His disciples and friends were overcome with grief. His enemies were crazed with anger. He alone was unmoved.

Another significant New Testament incident is that regarding the martyrdom of Stephen. We are told that Stephen's countenance as he faced his overwrought accusers was "as it had been the face of an angel." We are not told that Stephen's fortitude was the result of prayer, but we know that only constant fellowship with the heavenly Father could have enabled him to conduct himself with such serenity. Stephen, like Paul and countless other missionaries and martyrs, found that the way of Christianity is often the way of tribulation. At the same time he, as well as they, had a real assurance of help from God.

Turning to the Old Testament, we find that the finest conceptions of prayer are those of the prophets. Amos' denunciation of sacrifices and of songs of adoration as means of winning God's favor is particularly significant. It was because many people of the day thought of prayer and religious rites as valuable only because they were pleasing to God and, therefore, assured the worshiper of good luck, that this prophet represents Jehovah as saying:

"I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings, and your meat offerings, I will not accept *them:* neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols." (Amos 5. 21-23.)

We are indebted also to those singers of ancient Israel who composed the psalms for helping us to appreciate the significance of prayer as adoration.

While many of these reflect a spirit quite out of harmony with New Testament ideals, there are also many fine lines and verses which help us to realize how great is man's need for fellowship with the Father, and for expression of the deep emotion which is stirred by a consciousness of God's loving care for his children.

Teaching from other sources. There is available also an abundance of extra-biblical materials which illuminate the problem of prayer. As suggested above, the experience of many missionaries testifies to the power of prayer and indicates the nature of God's help.

The Discovery of God's Will

Mistaken views of God's will. Another group of early adolescent problems grows out of the Intermediate's mistaken conception of what God desires of man and of the manner in which those desires are revealed. Here is a pupil who is very much perplexed because he has received no such special call to service as did Samuel. Here is another who is worrying over the question of sin. Conceiving of the will of God as a fiat arbitrarily imposed upon man, he is quite sure that unintentionally he has sinned and has brought upon himself God's wrath.

Here, again, if we are to map out a satisfactory course of procedure, we must understand clearly the origin and nature of each of these misconceptions. We are better able to help the boy who is worrying over the problem of sin if we realize that his thought of God's will is colored, as was the thinking of early Christians, by Roman legalistic ideas. The Roman

state was a great military organization which claimed as its privilege the right to make and impose laws, the purpose of which was not clearly understood by those upon whom they were imposed and which did not always contribute to the welfare of the common people. This rather arbitrary conception of the function of law modified the Christian idea of God's will when Christianity came into contact with Roman civilization, and Christianity has not yet entirely shaken itself loose from the Roman influence.

One of the most effective ways to solve the difficulties of boys and girls whose thinking is colored by this legalistic conception of God's laws is to direct their attention to those portions of the Bible where social consequences are regarded as the final measure of conduct. In Jesus' picture of the last judgment there is no evidence of arbitrary justice. Here God identifies his will with the welfare of humanity. "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." This, not obedience to a whim arbitrarily imposed, is the test of justice.

Another seriously misleading conception is that obedience is required only on special occasions and in regard to special tasks. This idea has undoubtedly grown out of a justifiable emphasis upon the fact that God does call people for specially hard and important tasks. The call of Peter and John to discipleship, Paul's call to missionary work in Macedonia, were important events in the lives of

those individuals and in the history of Christianity as well. The very existence of the Christian Church depends upon the willingness of its members to heed such calls when they come. But, granting this, it is necessary to bear in mind also that Christianity loses sight of its real purpose when it allows people to forget that God desires obedience to his laws in the small, inconspicuous acts of every day.

The conception that the call to obedience comes only through unusual channels also has its origin in the distant past. It has been handed down from a time when men saw God in the unusual, when wonders and phenomena which could be explained in no other way were regarded as evidence of God's power. The effort of modern science to discover the laws of the physical universe has explained many of these hitherto mysterious phenomena and rendered earlier positions untenable. But this does not mean that we no longer hear the voice of God in the physical world. Rather has it made possible an enlargement of vision. We now see God in all of his creation, we see him more clearly because we are beginning to glimpse something of the order and unity of the great laws through which he works. Further, we hear God's call to service in all of nature, in the processes which are familiar and easily understood, as well as in those whose real nature is still shrouded in mystery.

How to build better conceptions. In building up more adequate conceptions of obedience to God's will and of the way in which the call to obedience is heard, it is usually necessary to begin by pointing out the inconsistencies in the present thinking of

the pupils. Confusion of thought must be done away with and erroneous ideas abandoned before a satisfactory position may be attained.

A second step in the building of better conceptions will consist in pointing out to the pupils the opportunities for service in everyday tasks. Life is sometimes transformed for boys and girls who are helped to see that God is as interested in honest endeavor at school and in the faithful performance of home duties as he was in the services which the boy Samuel rendered in the Temple.

Similarly, boys and girls need to learn to hear the voice of God in these everyday tasks. They need also to learn to hear the voice of God, as the prophets did, in the cry of human need. And they need to hear God's voice in the interests and aptitudes with which he has endowed them. A gift of musical ability, of imagination, of mechanical genius, usually constitutes a call to enrich the life of society by its consecrated use.

The Relation of Religion and Truth

Another problem which must be faced by the teacher of Intermediates is that regarding the relation of religion to science and, indeed, to the whole field of truth. The problem is not absent in work with younger pupils, but because of the increase of the questioning attitude and the enlargement of the reasoning ability it becomes particularly acute in the early teens. There is a new tendency to bring together various aspects of the thought life and to ask regarding the relationship between school studies and the work of the class in religious educa-

tion. This is especially true in the case of young people who have been introduced by the public schools to the results of modern research particularly in the fields of the natural sciences.

Teachers, as well as parents, should welcome the coming of these new tendencies. They should see in them signs of growth. Pupils are making progress from the immaturity of childhood toward the fullness of experience and thought that makes possible participation in the affairs of modern life. The teacher should be happy when some of the more thoughtful of them manifest a particular interest in these relationships.

How this problem may be solved. In dealing with the problem it is important that we keep in mind the fact that our present-day appreciation of knowledge would not characterize all of the ages of the past. It is not long since it was the common custom to regard knowledge as of the evil one. Only a short time ago there were many who felt that science and religious faith were utterly incompatible and that to engage in research of any kind meant the certain wrecking of the religious life. It has been the glory of Protestantism that it has helped to secure our release from the burden of such an error. While it is true that the world of our day has not yet thoroughly accepted the position, the very genius of the Reformation movement involves the release of mankind from restraint in the pursuit of truth. In this respect we stand squarely by the teaching of Jesus that the truth makes us free. We find that God and truth are not contradictory terms. Slowly the world has been shaking itself free of the

shackles of erroneous tradition and adopting more and more thoroughly the idea that in the truth nothing is to be feared, but that, on the other hand, there are to be found in it safety and spiritual as well as physical health.

In facing the question with pupils in the Intermediate class the teacher will be well advised to adopt immediately and fully an attitude of absolute confidence in truth. There is nothing in the Christian religion that needs to be hidden or sheltered. It has withstood criticism of the most searching kind, and each attack has left it more secure in its position. There is less reason to fear what the future will bring forth than there is to be discouraged over what has happened in the past. The adoption of such an attitude will have the advantage of bringing to the teacher a freedom and a happiness not hitherto experienced. Moreover, it will evoke from the pupils an open-mindedness that will be of the highest value in class work. It is a well-known trait of human nature that in the presence of attack we tend to the building of defenses. This holds true in the case of the mental life. An effective way to confirm people in their present thinking is to make the most vigorous possible onslaught on their possessions. On the other hand the adoption of open-mindedness tends to bring a similar readiness to grant dispassionate consideration to the problems at hand.

In the second place the teacher should adopt frankly the attitude of the learner. It may happen that in the discussion of particular topics some pupil in the class will have more extensive or more

accurate information than does the teacher. At least his point of view is worthy of consideration. It may well be that the teacher's opinions are tentative and perhaps in error. This is of itself no disgrace. Dignity suffers only when one with inadequate information declines to admit the possibility of error and later is compelled to acknowledge it.

In addition to adopting an attitude of open-mindedness and humility the teacher must work definitely for the development of the same attitudes on the part of the pupils. If we can help our pupils to avoid the peril of the closed mind, we shall have contributed most valuably to their development. Some of the most tragic happenings in the history of the Christian church have come as the results of a refusal to reconsider positions already accepted. We have allowed to go unheeded the advice of Gamaliel when he urged that matters be allowed to work themselves out, for if they were not of God they would fall away of themselves, and if they were of God unhappy would we be if we opposed them. Hosts of people have yet to learn that it is scientific to change one's mind.

In the development of this frank open-mindedness regarding all things it is important to watch that an attitude of an impatience with the past and an irreverence for it be not developed. Most of the conclusions reached by great thinkers of days gone by have had to be revised by students of later days, but that does not mean that those conclusions were without value to the later thinkers and to the people of all times. They were indeed the very stepping-stones by which others were able to rise to greater heights.

Nowhere do we find this readiness to conserve what is best in the past by using it as a means for discovering new truths more than in the attitude of Jesus. He did not hesitate to replace earlier moral standards by the fuller and finer message that he had for humanity, but never does he exhibit scorn or impatience toward the honest effort of the past. Youth is impetuous, and it is easy for boys and girls in the early teens to pass hasty and sweeping condemnation of everything of yesterday. They need no encouragement in this. Their need is rather that of the steadying which will help them to appreciate duly the things of the past while they resolutely and courageously journey onward. In the development of their inquiring and critical attitudes they need also the cultivation of the spirit of appreciation and reverence.

The problem is more than general. The teacher will be called upon to deal with specific questions. For instance, some pupils will find difficulties with the tenets of the particular denomination with which they are affiliated. Almost invariably the question will come up as to the truth of and justification for the doctrines of the particular branch of the church. These difficulties can be solved, not by a blind defense of the position of one's own denomination or by unfair criticism of bodies whose ideas differ, but by a fearless facing of the facts. Explanation of the origin and purpose of some of our present-day customs and frank admission that some of the practices now followed are no longer adequate for our day should be accompanied with recognition that they have served a great purpose

and call for appreciation and reverence. In so doing the teacher does not attempt the impossible by trying to hold the pupil to a blind denominational loyalty, but puts him in a position to come himself to a reasoned decision.

Developing an Appreciation of the Bible

Because the Bible is the great source book for the study of the Christian religion the development of an appreciation of its meaning and purpose is also essential to the building of a reasonable faith.

Freedom in Biblical interpretation. One of the questions which will probably arise is that regarding freedom in the study of the Bible and in the interpretation of it. We have to recognize frankly that there are differences among modern biblical students in the matter of such things as the authorship, the dates, and the literary character of various books in the Bible. Pupils will probably ask such questions as, "Did Moses write the Pentateuch?" Honest questions of this kind must not be lightly brushed aside. Driven under cover they tend to fester and hurt the whole mental and spiritual life. Such questions must be faced with candor and courtesy. This does not mean that the teacher is under obligation to say immediately all that he thinks or even knows about the problems. He must remember that he is first of all a teacher and that the test of his work is the extent to which he has been able to help his pupils. The question is not, then, one of telling everything, but of telling all that would seem to be helpful at the time to the pupil in the development of thought and religious experience. Fortu-

nately, the value of the Bible does not stand or fall with any particular answer to such questions as those just mentioned. We have evidence of this in the fact that people of varying viewpoints manifest unmistakable Christian spirit. The task of the teacher, therefore, involves the discovery of satisfying answers to these questions of the pupils, but the chief element in it is that of helping the boys and girls to derive real nourishment from the Bible for their growing religious life.

Relation of religion and science. Another particularly acute question growing out of the study of the Bible is that of the relation of religion and science. It comes up specifically in the discussion of the creation as found in the early chapters of Genesis, but in reality it is a larger problem. There are those who feel that the adoption of scientific explanations of the history of the world and of our present life eliminate divine participation. Such an idea is really illogical and need not trouble us. The discovery of law in life does not eliminate God, rather it reveals him. In the old days primitive man saw in the flood, the earthquake, the eclipse, and the plague the workings of the Divine Being. We explain these matters on the basis of science and hold that the happenings are according to law rather than contrary to it. In fact, as we study the world in which we live and the people who live in it we find daily new evidences of the presence of God's power, his purpose, and his love. The reverent scientist is thoroughly religious when he thinks God's thoughts after him.

The Bible and to-day's life. Teachers of Inter-

mediates will also find it worth while to consider the question of the place of the Bible in the life of to-day. Many of the young people have reached the conclusion that biblical material, and particularly the Old Testament stories, have very little to do with the affairs of their everyday life. Many factors have probably contributed to the development of this idea, among them the methods in which biblical material has been presented to the boys and girls during their early years by teachers and parents. The undue emphasis placed upon the remembering of unfamiliar names and dates has undoubtedly been largely responsible for the feeling that the Bible is of little practical value. It will be well, therefore, for the teacher to demonstrate to the pupils that the Bible is really a valuable source of inspiration to the people of our own time as it has been to men and women through the centuries. He will help them to discover in it solutions for some of the ethical problems by which many adolescents are sorely perplexed. Their own difficulties will seem less significant when they learn that the very questions which seem to baffle them have intrigued the interest of men and women throughout the ages. The knowledge that in spite of many unanswered questions these same people have retained an unshaken faith in God, will reassure them.

How to use the Bible. Finally, the very practical question of how to use the Bible must be given careful consideration. As was noted in an earlier section of this chapter, too many boys and girls think of Bible reading as a duty to be performed for the sake of material benefits which may ensue. This

leads to a cursory and haphazard Bible reading from which little spiritual help need be expected. The method of permitting the Bible to fall open at any place and applying to conduct the words upon which the eye first alights should also be condemned. It puts religion on the same plane as the old oracles about which the histories tell.

The Bible is composed of widely different types of literature. In it may be found history, prophecy or sermons, psalms or hymns, stories with ethical teachings, drama, biography, letters, proverbs or wise sayings, and poetry. In turning to such a collection of material for help it is necessary to select carefully to fit one's needs. This will at times mean the reading of much longer selections than is usually the custom. Some of the stories are quite long, and it is necessary to read them through to see their beauty and get their message. Some of them are difficult to understand apart from a knowledge of the social conditions in which they have developed. One must, therefore, be unhurried and fresh when he takes up his Bible. Because of these difficulties it is usually best for early adolescent boys and girls to pursue their Bible reading under the guidance of their teacher, or to follow a book of devotions where biblical readings have been carefully selected because of their bearing upon particular topics.

Typical problems. Space has permitted the inclusion of only some, though probably the most outstanding, of the questions bearing on the development of a reasonable faith. It has not been the intention to imply that all of these problems must be dealt with in each class, nor that they be taken

up in this order, nor considered after this fashion. Rather has there been an attempt to point out in some detail the nature of the difficulties to be expected and possible solutions. Each teacher will have to determine what problems merit his or her consideration and what methods of attack will be most advisable for particular classes and, indeed, for individual pupils.

For Further Study

1. Arrange the following selections in order of their value as means of developing satisfactory conceptions of how God helps people:
   (a) The story of Jesus in Gethsemane.
   (b) The story of the stoning of Stephen.
   (c) The story of Elisha and the prophets of Baal.
   (d) Psalm 136.
2. What would you say to a teacher who objected to the study of such a textbook as the present one, saying that all this talk about studying the problems of the pupils is waste of time, that the important thing for the teacher to do is to see that the pupils learn the Bible?
3. From any textbook prepared for use with Intermediate pupils select three lessons that you consider will contribute to the development of an adequate conception of God.
4. An Intermediate teacher heard one of his pupils remark that he had decided to discontinue the practice of daily Bible study, giving as his reason that he had faithfully read his Bible every day since he had been old enough to do so and that he didn't seem to have as good luck as other boys

who had not done so. If you had such an experience, how would you answer the boy?

5. Outline a lesson on the value of Bible study, giving a clear statement of aim and indicating what materials you would use.

6. Outline a talk to be given to a group of parents, some of whom had complained because their children had reported that their teachers had said the early Hebrew idea of God set forth in some parts of the Old Testament was inconsistent with the teachings of Jesus and, therefore, untenable at the present time.

7. What would you say to a boy or girl who came to you for help in deciding whether or not to plan to go to college? How would you help such a person to find out what God wanted him to do in such a case?

8. Indicate three selections from the Bible which you would use to teach a lesson on "How God answers prayer."

9. Write a letter that might be sent to a fourteen-year-old who said that he would like to have someone tell him what God is like.

References for Supplementary Reading

What It Means to Be a Christian, Bosworth.
What May We Believe? Soper.
The Main Points, Brown.
Things Fundamental, Jefferson.
Youth and the Bible, Streibert.
The Bible as Literature, Wild.

CHAPTER III

PROMOTING SOCIAL CO-OPERATION

The word "social" has become associated with the word "religion" to such an extent that people of our day are scarcely able to think of one without the other. It was not always so. Going back but a few decades, we find the term noticeably absent from our religious literature. And yet it is not something entirely new. Students of the psychology of religion claim that from the earliest times religion has been essentially a social affair. Some of them, indeed, consider that to be the distinguishing characteristic of the religious life. When we think of the teachings of the great Hebrew prophets we recall readily their thorough identification of religion with righteousness and brotherhood. One teacher alone surpasses them in this regard. In the great commandment Jesus associates social living with personal relationship to God in unique and supreme fashion. The Christian Church has not always been true to the spirit of the Master in this respect, but when it has understood him at all well it has insisted that to be a Christian involved unconditionally good will toward and fellowship with our fellow men.

Importance of social interpretation. The social interpretation of religion is a matter of special importance to the teacher of Intermediates. The

pupils are coming to the time of enlarged development of social tendencies and capacities. While it is not true that the social impulse is born at this time, it is certain that it becomes prominent to a degree unknown in earlier life. Even though the teacher should neglect this matter entirely the newly developed tendencies would find expression. There is, however, no valid reason for expecting that such a policy would yield satisfactory results. The natural human desire for companionship and for participation in group life is just as likely to lead to undesirable contacts as to desirable ones. If, therefore, the increased interest in and capacity for group life which are characteristic of the early adolescent period are to contribute to the building up of a well-balanced Christian character, they must be carefully nurtured and directed.

Problems of the Home

In dealing with the question of enriching the social relationships of Intermediate boys and girls we may well begin with some of the problems of the family circle. Ordinarily, family relationships are subjected to quite a strain when one or more members of the group are passing through the early adolescent period.

Sources of difficulty. It may as well be admitted at once that many of the difficulties of adjustment in family relationship are rooted in the changes which occur during early adolescence. It is a characteristic of Intermediate boys and girls that they overestimate their own abilities. Privileges are demanded for which they are not yet ready and feel-

ings are hurt when parents insist, quite properly in many cases, that such privileges be not assumed. In many instances the statement that the early adolescent wants to act like a child and be treated like a man is only too apt.

It is only fair to state, on the other hand, that there are also many cases where at least a part of the responsibility for the clash between parent and child must be put on the parent. It is so easy for father and mother to forget that Margaret and James are now ready for and feel that they have a right to a different place in the family circle than that which they occupied a short while before. While not all of the privileges demanded by youth may be conceded, many more might be granted than are usually conceded. Self-direction may be permitted in many of the details of life on the understanding that responsibilities will be increased as dependability is demonstrated.

There is too often justification for such a protest as was made recently by a first-year Intermediate girl, who, when asked how her invitation to a class party had been worded, exclaimed: "How should I know? I never saw it. It came to the house all right, but mother got it out of the mail box. She opened it and read it. When I came home from school she told me about it and said I might go. But she didn't show it to me. I suppose she destroyed it. I wonder if I shall ever have anything of my own to do as I please with as long as I live in that house!"

Methods of developing better relations. The problem of relationships between parents and their

early adolescent boys and girls constitutes, therefore, an appropriate topic for discussion at a parents' meeting or at a conference between the teacher and individual parents. Parents must be helped to see the significance of the Intermediate's demand for independence. They must be encouraged to provide ways in which their boys and girls may safely satisfy their normal desire for self-direction.

The problem should also be brought before the boys and girls. Young people should be helped to recognize that there are other elements in the situation besides their desire for freedom. Many of them fail to realize that the responsibilities of parents entitle them to a voice in the plans of their children. Pupils who have it brought to their attention that their fathers and mothers must pay for any mistakes which they make will be the more ready to concede to their parents the right to insist on such safeguards as warm clothing, early hours, and competent chaperonage.

In one class where a frank discussion of the problem was engaged in, one of the pupils threw a good deal of light upon the question by pointing out that not all the difficulties are over when self-control has been achieved. As this young girl phrased it: "It isn't quite so easy as you would suppose to decide what to do. Mother says, 'Do what you think best,' and when I have almost decided to go to a dance with my cousins I am made perfectly wretched because I know that mother feels it is better not to dance. But if I decide to stay at home, I keep thinking all evening of the good times I would have

had if I had gone. It was really much simpler when mother used to say 'yes' or 'no' and I knew I had to obey."

Developing better relations between brothers and sisters. The problem of relationships between brothers and sisters is one that should be discussed with both parents and pupils. Parents often increase the difficulties by insisting that certain experiences shall be shared which do not need to be shared at all. They could undoubtedly do much to relieve the tension if they had a sympathetic understanding of the point of view of each child.

In the discussion in class the importance of respecting the point of view of other members of the family even when we do not share it should be emphasized. It would be very unfortunate if everyone thought and acted just as everyone else. Life is richer and more interesting because of the differences between individuals. The best way to do, then, when one becomes conscious of differences between brothers or sisters and oneself is to try to find out what pleasures they enjoy and what things they value and help them to be as happy as possible. The college freshman who said of her younger sister, "Well, of course, there are many things we don't enjoy in common, but then there are many things we do," had found a solution for the younger sister problem. "I can help sister plan her parties," this young woman continued. "She enjoys all the new ideas I bring home from college, and her bunch of friends seem glad to let me tag along as chaperone. It is really lots of fun." Unfortunately, such an experience is all too rare. There are many people

who go through life like Maggie Tulliver, longing for love of brother or sister, and failing to realize it because there was no one to help them overcome the misunderstandings and differences which manifested themselves in early childhood.

Another way in which the teacher can contribute to the solution of this problem is by planning activities in which boys and girls of a wide range of maturity may participate. A school party or picnic provides such an opportunity. So do interdepartment affairs, and big-brother-and-sister parties at which sometimes Senior boys and girls act as hosts and hostesses to their Intermediate brothers and sisters, and Intermediate pupils entertain the Junior members of their families.

The Intimate Social Group

The Intermediate's intimate circle includes also his chum. This relationship is perhaps the most satisfying of the period. Nearly every early adolescent boy and girl has a chum, and most of them belong to little groups of chums constituting, in the case of the boys, gangs and, in the case of the girls, cliques. And yet the relationship does not often reach its finest possibilities. The petty quarrels and jealousies which sometimes cast a shadow over the friendships of the early teens indicate that many Intermediates have yet to learn the importance of trusting a chum even when it is difficult to understand him.

Temptations in group relationships. An even more serious problem is created when devotion to chums is not balanced by independent ethical dis-

crimination. It has been said of the gang that it develops loyalty but not morality. The same is true of girl friendships. The relationship to the other members of the clique seems the all-important thing. Splendid as is the spirit of loyalty, it often plunges boys and girls into temptations as trying as the fiery furnace into which the three Hebrews were cast when their principles clashed with the standards of the social group in which they found themselves. Because Intermediate boys and girls frequently face this kind of a situation, lesson materials should include many stories such as those which tell how the young Hebrews stood in the midst of the flames, but were not consumed by them because God was with them.

Boy-and-girl problems. Problems growing out of the relationship between the sexes are among those which teachers of Intermediates are likely to face. The attitude of early adolescent boys and girls toward each other may be anything from curiosity to actual repulsion. As long as antagonism between the sexes does not become so acute as to interfere with the morale of the school, some teachers feel that there is no reason for concern about it. There is, however, a real advantage to both boys and girls in learning how to work and play naturally together during these years before interest in individual members of the other sex has developed. Young people who grow accustomed to associating with each other during this period of development will be the better prepared for the later period when present indifference will be replaced by attraction between the sexes. For this reason the program for

Intermediates should include opportunities for co-operation between the sexes in both work and play activities. Those activities in which there is practically no suggestion of pairing off nor any stimulation of interest in individual members of the group will, of course, be the most satisfactory.

Separation of the sexes. In this connection it is interesting to notice that the policy of the church school has differed greatly from that of the State schools in respect to the matter of permitting boys and girls to work together. In the majority of State schools co-education has been adopted from the kindergarten through to the time of graduation from college. On the other hand the separation of the sexes has been the common practice throughout the church school. It is to be suspected that in neither case has the policy been adopted because of its educational possibilities. The necessity for economy has undoubtedly been a factor in determining the method of the State schools, while in the case of the church school the separation of the sexes has the advantage that it simplifies somewhat the disciplinary problems of the classroom, an important point where untrained teachers are used. The experiences of the past do not, therefore, provide sufficient data upon which to decide which method will yield the best results in preparing boys and girls to meet the problems of social life. Quite recently some high-school teachers have been advocating the segregation of the sexes in certain subjects, and it may be that the policy which has all along been followed by the church school is the most satisfactory in view of the rather intimate and personal

character of the topics dealt with in the classroom of the church school. In any case it is important that church-school teachers appreciate the significance of their action in segregating the sexes and that definite efforts be made to offset any possible disadvantage of this method of work by providing in the activities outside the classroom abundant opportunity for association and for co-operation between the sexes.

Class discussion of inter-sex relations. Helpful as the opportunities for association may be, they need to be supplemented by the frank discussion in the classroom of certain problems arising out of the social relationship between the sexes. Here is a group of boys and girls who feel that they are being unfairly treated because they are not allowed to go riding by themselves at night. "What do they think we're going to do," they ask, impatiently, "that they have to be sending someone with us all the time?" There are two answers to the question. The first is that young people do not understand the force of the temptations to which they sometimes expose themselves; and the other, that they do not understand the impression they are giving when they go off on such a venture.

Materials which develop fine ideals of the sex relationship. Another way of meeting this problem is through the use of stories which build up high ideals of the sex relationship. The Intermediate girl is not yet ready for courtship, but she has her dreams, and these almost always include, if they do not center around, the idea of love and even of marriage some time in the days far ahead. And it

is the ideals that are forming at this time which will control the conduct of the future. If the girl thinks now of marriage as an opportunity for finding expression for the impulse to love, and to serve because she loves, there is much more likelihood that her dreams will find realization in a happy married life than will be the case if she begins now to look forward to married life as a means for gratifying the desire for prestige.

While the Intermediate boy does not ordinarily think of the future in terms of love and marriage he, too, has his dreams. He dreams of inventions and discoveries and conquest. But into the picture which he weaves there sometimes creeps the idea that marriage is a joke or a nuisance. And this idea, though overshadowed by others, sticks to the boy. In later years, when the longing for feminine companionship surges through him, it may make him bitter, cynical, and careless in his choice.

Fortunately, not all boyish dreams include such a picture. Into some of them there comes the idea of chivalry. The ideal hero is a knight, a Galahad, whose strength is as the strength of ten because his heart is pure. The boy thinks of the hero as one who protects and honors womanhood.

So it is possible to feed the girls' appetite for romance with stories which interpret womanhood and love at their best. Both the great love stories of fiction and the great love stories of biography have a place in the program for Intermediate girls. Similarly, for the boys there are both reality and fancy. For every early adolescent boy there are some stories of chivalry which will appeal.

The Wider Social Group

Fine as the contacts within the narrow circle of home folks and classmates may be, the pupil who limits himself to these relationships limits at the same time his opportunities for personal enrichment and for contributing to the welfare of society. Unfortunately, the temptation to confine one's interests to a narrow circle of friends which is strong at every period of life makes an especial appeal during early adolescence. Any class in the church school may find it easy to adopt an attitude of exclusiveness toward all outsiders, but a class of Intermediate boys and girls will probably find it difficult not to do so. Snobbishness and a narrow range of social interests are among the undesirable developments resulting when the social impulse of early adolescence is permitted to find its own outlets. One of the greatest services which teachers can render is to help their pupils realize themselves as members of larger as well as smaller social groups.

Organization of larger groups. As far as organization is significant as a means of broadening social interests, the system now generally accepted as standard for church schools is admirably adapted to the accomplishment of this purpose. When a pupil enrolls in a completely departmentized school he automatically becomes a member of a class, a department, and of the still larger group, the school. In many denominations, with the approach of early adolescence, he is also encouraged to come into church membership.

Where the purpose of such organization is not

lost sight of, good results are to be expected from it. The organization of department groups makes possible co-operation with other boys and girls of the same age as well as with those a little older and younger. Inter-department activities provide contacts with individuals of a wider range of age, while participation in the life of the church brings an opportunity for fellowship with all the members of the Christian family in one's own denomination.

The teacher must remember that affiliation with any of these groups does not automatically produce the desired result. It is quite possible for a pupil to be a member of an organized department or of a church without having any greater realization of his place in the group than he would have had if he had not been formally received into membership in it. A class of second-year Intermediate pupils who protested against the ruling of the department officers with the words, "What business have they to say what we are to do? We are responsible to no one but our own teacher," had little appreciation of the meaning of department organization even after eighteen months' membership in an Intermediate Department.

One reason why in so many instances organization fails to yield social values is because its possibilities in this respect have never been realized. The method is used solely because of its recruiting possibilities. The officers of a school feel that they are making progress when they are able to show a neatly prepared record of how many pupils have been regularly enrolled in each department of the church school, or have permitted their names to be placed

upon the church register. So they promote the organization of all phases of work with boys and girls. This facilitates the keeping of records and engenders an enthusiasm which registers in the securing of many new names for the record sheets, results which in themselves are of little value. Clearly, something more than mere organization is required.

Co-operation of teachers required. The problem is more than an administrative one. The officers of the school must plan for a type of organization which will best fit the local situation. They must see that opportunities for different classes working with and for each other are provided. But their work will not be as effective as it should be unless the teachers also plan definitely for the utilization of these opportunities. The competent teacher appreciates the value of an invitation for his class to conduct a worship period of the larger group. He is glad to have his pupils share in the work of the church. When such opportunities come he does everything he can to help them render a valuable service for the sake of the rest of the group as well as for their own sakes. For he knows that each time they participate creditably and happily in the work of these larger groups they have come into a better realization of their relationship to God's great family.

Interchurch activities. Nor may the teacher feel satisfied when his pupils have begun to feel at home in their own local church. Many Christians have limited their opportunities for service and for personal enrichment by confining interests to their own denomination. Interchurch projects and commu-

nity projects present splendid opportunities for furthering the religious development of Intermediate boys and girls. The pupils who have served the members of another denomination than their own or contributed to the welfare of the community as a whole have had an experience which will help to make them Christians of broad vision.

Teachers who encourage these wider relationships must be prepared to face difficulties. Often the interchurch activity seems to conflict with the denominational project. Perhaps the church plans a Christmas-tree ceremony and the community as a whole also plans one. Even where these are not to be held on the same night, the two events interfere with each other. Pupils have not the time or the energy to prepare for both. Mothers complain that too much is expected of the boys and girls. What is the church to do? Shall it adopt a policy of defending its own rights, a policy which will inevitably lead to conflict, or shall it co-operate at some sacrifice of its interests as an institution? The church has a responsibility here that cannot be ignored with impunity. There is little advantage for it to preach brotherly love and co-operation if it follows a policy of selfishness. It is the interests of the pupils which are paramount and not the interests of any one organization. If the boys and girls can best express the spirit of Jesus by celebrating his birthday with the boys and girls of the entire community, they should not be prevented from doing so, no matter what the cost. Whether or not this particular aspect of the problem presents itself, the general problem of adjusting programs and

avoiding unchristian clashes is one which practically every school faces. In meeting it the church school must always remember that example is more potent in molding character than is precept. It is of little use to emphasize the social nature of Christianity in the classroom if the actual practice of the institution is definitely unsocial.

The problem in class. In the development of the consciousness of relationship with larger social groups the teacher need not feel limited to the method of teaching through direct experience. Here again much value will be obtained through class discussions on such questions as the importance of church membership and the obligations of citizenship. There are available also many stories which lend incentive to the sharing of life with others, among which certain stories from the life of Jesus stand out as pre-eminent. His interest in all whom he met, his willingness to help those in need even when the giving of such help made serious inroads upon his strength and upon the time which he desired to devote to the proclamation of his message, his willingness to befriend the social outcasts of his time as depicted in such episodes as the visit to the home of Zacchæus, his washing of the disciples' feet, his sharing of the loaves and fishes with all who in their eagerness to hear him had neglected to provide for their own needs—all these inspire his followers to seek closer contacts with their fellow citizens.

Further, the teacher can do much to help the pupils feel at home in some of the activities of these larger groups. Simple explanations of the various

parts of the ritual used in the church service which may be unfamiliar will be valuable. The beautiful symbolism of the communion service needs to be understood to be appreciated. The long story back of the Apostles' Creed throws a flood of light upon the reason why most denominations include it in their services. Even some of the psalms require explanation if they are to be used intelligently. Such lines as "The sun shall not smite thee by day, or the moon by night" are full of meaning difficult for the uninitiated to grasp because they are clothed in the thought forms of an age long since past.

Developing World Mindedness

Even as no individual lives unto himself, so may no community remain isolated. A rich and full life lived within the confines of one's native State or town involves contacts with many other parts of the world. American boys and girls play with toys made in Japan. They buy fruit from an Italian and ice cream from a Greek. They listen in to the songs of Italy, Ireland, Scotland, France, or Germany, broadcast often by men and women who themselves are not American citizens. They mingle in classroom and playground with boys and girls of foreign parentage who are eagerly and industriously taking advantage of the democratic American educational system. Few American communities are without some citizen whose appearance and speech betray their alien origin. These people participate in American business life, in American recreations, and, as they prosper, in American social life.

Present attitudes and their causes. Increasing

association, with an indebtedness to those of other lands, has not made for appreciation of or respect for them, however. There is among the young and inexperienced members of society of this country a marked tendency to regard with scorn persons of other races and nations within their own communities. This attitude persists in spite of the fact that many of those who are looked upon with disfavor are richly deserving of the high regard of American boys and girls. Such an attitude must, of course, be counteracted, or, better still, there must be put in its place desirable attitudes and behavior. What can be done?

The first step in eradicating this attitude is the discovery of its origin. In many cases it is rooted in ignorance and misunderstanding. People have assumed that because those of other races were different from themselves they were inferior. This prejudice once formed has colored all they have observed or heard about them. Where the prejudice has been handed down through generations, from parent to child, and from teacher to pupil, it has become so deep-seated as to make distrust of the foreigner seem almost instinctive.

This idea that foreigners are inferior is the more difficult to eradicate because it is continually being re-enforced by newspapers, picture shows, and some current literature. The desire to be entertained is deep-seated in human nature, and those whose business it is to entertain try to provide their clients with the most amusing stories they can find. So, because the bizarre elements in the life of the foreigner make good news, an altogether dispropor-

tionate amount of this material finds its way into the newspapers. For the same reason the comic show presents only one side of the life of a people and often grotesquely exaggerates that. That is why many American school boys and girls, in spite of our vaunted educational opportunities, know more about the Tong wars than they do about the character of the Chinese people. That is why they think of the Southern mountaineer of their own country as an ignorant moonshiner and know nothing of the heroism which these people have displayed whenever this land has called for defenders. That is why a class of third-generation American girls in one of our large cities, some of them of German and others of Irish descent, were unanimous in their opinion that foreigners are always queer.

In addition to this accidental development of prejudice there has been considerable deliberate building up for selfish purposes of unchristian attitudes toward other races. This was so in war time and there is evidence that the process is being continued in times of peace. Indeed, it is just that which has given the word "propaganda" its sinister meaning. Almost on every side our young people are subjected to influences that develop prejudice and hate.

In view of this situation teachers must proceed both negatively and positively. Every effort must be made to prevent the play of these undesirable influences upon the pupils. Care should be taken to avoid the use of certain popular and disrespectful designations for those of other races. Even the term "heathen" as indicating those of other religious beliefs and practices than our own should be ban-

ished. Thought and conversation regarding other members of God's family should be in harmony with the spirit involved in the petitions we make when we pray to the God of all peoples and call him "our Father."

Informational materials. But mere negative action in this matter is far from adequate. Positive and definite steps must be taken to build the kind of attitude that can be called Christian. The first step in this matter is the furnishing of accurate information. Teachers should familiarize themselves with such impartial and unprejudiced studies of racial characteristics and of the life and customs of peoples of various nations as are available. In presenting facts regarding foreigners to the pupils care should be taken not to emphasize those things which seem peculiar or queer to those of us who have been reared in a different social system, but to center attention upon the splendid human qualities which command respect.

Inspirational material. There is also another type of material which contributes to the development of an attitude of friendliness toward those who are of a different race than our own. This is the story which tells how a certain individual whose judgment is unquestioned has regarded the foreigner. Such a story is that of the good Samaritan, its significance for the development of an appreciation of other races lying in the fact that Jesus represented the hero of the incident as being a Samaritan, to the Jews a despised race. The problem of the foreigner is dealt with admirably also in the story of Ruth, the Moabitess, who, though

an alien, became the wife of a prominent Hebrew citizen and an ancestress of the great king, David, from whose royal line Jesus himself was descended.

Contacts with those of other races. Valuable as study and discussion may be, they should not be relied upon as the sole means of developing Christian attitudes toward other races. Appreciation and love of others develop more quickly and easily when there is opportunity for fellowship with them. Boys and girls who have heard from some bright young Chinese or Japanese stories of the land of his birth and who have learned from him some of the games which he played in his youth in his native land are likely to have a different attitude toward orientals than will those who have not had such an experience. Wherever it is possible, therefore, foreigners should be invited to meet with the pupils, and to share with them the activities of the class period and recreational hour. If this plan is not feasible, exchange of letters with boys and girls in mission schools may be used as a substitute.

Interest in others may also be developed through engaging in activities for their welfare. The donation of money and other articles for the benefit of people in foreign lands is valuable not only because it relieves distress but also because it helps to develop desirable attitudes on the part of the donors toward those who have been helped. The same is true of social service activities of any kind. For this reason there should be included in the religious educational program for Intermediates a number of service projects for those who are in need both in our own and other lands.

The Problem of War and Peace

None of these methods of promoting a better attitude toward other nations will be as effective as they should be unless the pupils are also given a more Christian conception of the way to settle disputes among nations. Much as we may admire other races, it is inevitable that there will sometimes occur clashes of will. What they desire to possess others will desire to have, and it will not always be clear which one is in the right. But that does not mean that satisfactory adjustments cannot be made. Similar differences between individuals, between communities, and between states occur and are settled amicably. The difficulty in international affairs is that we are still clinging to a method of settling disputes which we have outgrown in other relationships.

A problem for Intermediates. But what has this to do with adolescents? Intermediate boys and girls have no voice in determining the policies of nations and will not have any such voice for years to come. Yet, granting this, we must admit that the problem has a great deal to do with adolescents. Most of the attitudes which are dominant through life are set as early as adolescence. Even if we were certain that by the time the boys and girls now in their teens have attained their majority international law would have provided for the elimination of war, it would still be important to give these people an appreciation of the futility of war. For in such an event it will be these boys and girls who must keep the law and live under it. Past expe-

riences have demonstrated that if laws are to be effective, education must keep pace with lawmaking. And if international law is still in need of revision when the adolescents of to-day reach maturity, the extent of the contribution which they will make to the world-order will be determined largely by the education which they are receiving now.

A substitute for physical force. There are two points which the education of adolescents must stress if boys and girls are to be adequately prepared when the time comes for them to face the question of world peace. In the first place the importance of learning how to fight by some other method than by physical force must be demonstrated. The pugilistic tendency is too deep-seated in human nature to be eliminated even if such a course seemed desirable. Moreover, the world has need of men and women who are ready to come fearlessly to the defense of principle. But this does not mean that the childish inclination to strike out when opposed may be encouraged. Here, as in the case of other natural tendencies, impulse must be brought under control and trained to work itself out in more satisfactory ways. The method of settling disputes by force is not so serious when used in childhood because it is difficult for the child mind to conceive of any other way of defending his rights and also because the scars of childhood's battles heal so quickly; but it is indefensible in the case of mature individuals and of nations. With maturity comes the ability to use spiritual weapons as well as physical ones. The mature individual knows how to win victories by the slower and surer method of

education. And the scars left by physical combat between nations, as between mature individuals, do not pass away as easily as the scars of childhood's encounters. Besides the physical wounds there are those inflicted on the spirit which never heal permanently, but fester and break out again in venomous hatred, undoing all that victory has seemed to achieve. Because early adolescence is the time to "put away childish things," the ability to make adjustments without the use of force should be held up as an attribute of maturity and a mark of civilization.

Conflict over trivialities unjustifiable. A second point which education should stress is that conflict of any kind over trivialities is unjustifiable. Again we may illustrate from childhood. A young child will strike out even though the action against which he protests was a fair one. Altogether too many people carry over into maturity the inability of childhood to discriminate between irritation and justifiable anger. Even among nations there have been many quarrels over what were desires and not rights. It is, of course, not always an easy matter to determine what are the rights of an individual or a nation. But much needless conflict could be avoided if all of the parties concerned were sincerely trying to be fair. This too is an attitude which should come with maturity and with civilization. The teacher cannot overemphasize the need of developing the habit of being interested in safeguarding the rights of others as well as of oneself.

Developing right points of view. How are the right points of view to be developed? Again what

is to be avoided is as important as what is to be done. In times past warfare has been glorified out of all proportion to its real value. Ask any Intermediate boy to list the heroes of his country and the list will contain chiefly the names of its warriors. Ask him to write an essay on the life of one of these warrior heroes and he will stress his military exploits, paying little heed to other fine character traits. This is the direct result of our teaching and, indeed, of conditions in the past. Much of the heroism of an earlier day was the heroism of war. Ask any group of teachers to recommend a list of stories for use with Intermediates and you will be surprised how many of them have something to do with warfare.

We must not forget our obligation to the men and women of the future. For we owe them a fair picture of life, a well-balanced sense of values. We have not faithfully discharged our duty toward them unless we have told them of the debt which the world owes to physicians, scientists, statesmen, and others who have fairly faced great peace-time problems and given unsparingly of their time and talents to the welfare of their fellow citizens and the advance of civilization.

The problem must be approached directly and positively also. The question of the effectiveness of warfare as well as of the justification of making war should be faced quite frankly in class discussion. The present world situation throws a good deal of light upon these problems. What have we gained from the Great War? Certainly not the kind of peace for which we all longed when the conflict was

raging. While the church school cannot give the time to history and civics which the junior high school can devote to such subjects, there is no other place where boys and girls can better develop the habit of considering the problems which are daily facing this nation and all other nations of the world. When we have helped the early adolescent boys and girls in our land to make such a beginning we shall have taken a significant step toward the transformation of the present world order.

For Further Study

1. Outline a brief course of not more than four lessons suitable for use with Intermediate pupils on the general topic, "Home Relationships."
2. Outline a talk to be given at a parents' meeting on the topic, "The Friendships of the Early Adolescent."
3. Discuss the teaching value of the biblical stories about Daniel for use with early adolescent boys and girls. Outline a nonbiblical story which could be used in the same way as you would use these stories.
4. Criticize your own local situation with regard to the provision which it makes for the development of a wholesome attitude between the sexes.
5. List four stories for girls and four stories for boys which would contribute to the development of wholesome ideas of the relation between the sexes.
6. What points would you emphasize in a class discussion with a group of Intermediate pupils on the question of church membership?
7. What actual advantages are there in your own

local situation in having early adolescent boys and girls join the church? Suggest improvements which would make the experience of belonging to the church a more valuable one for your pupils.

8. What evidence have you that the attitude of your pupils toward the foreign born in your community is: (*a*) satisfactory, (*b*) unsatisfactory?

9. From any course of lessons prepared for Intermediate pupils select three which will contribute to the development of world-mindedness.

10. Can you recall certain missionary talks that have been given in your school which you feel really helped the pupils to understand and appreciate foreigners? Indicate something of the general nature of these talks and state why you feel that they were beneficial.

11. Make a list of the stories which you would use: (*a*) in breaking down an attitude of snobbishness toward others; and (*b*) in building up an appreciation of the values and obligations of friendship.

References for Supplementary Reading

Girlhood and Character, Moxcey, Chapters VI, VII.
Method in Teaching Religion, Betts and Hawthorne, Chapter XVII.
Intermediate Method in the Church School, McKibben, Chapters VIII, IX, pp. 63-67.
Handbook for Workers with Young People, Thompson, Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

THE RIGHT USE OF PRIVILEGE

By many early adolescents growing up is regarded as a process of throwing off restraint. In their thinking they are not far in advance of the point of view of the small boy who when scolded for spending so much time in his swing instead of at work remarked that he wished he was a king so that he might swing all day. Intermediates know, of course, that adulthood brings responsibilities, but they greatly overestimate the freedom of grown-ups to take up or lay down their obligations. They have little realization of the fact that the privilege of self-direction may be accorded with safety only to those who understand the laws upon which the foundations of social living rest and are willing to conform to them. In other words, they have not yet seen that freedom is possible only within certain restricted limits.

Unsatisfactory as is the early adolescent conception of the privileges of maturity, it is a natural outcome of their experiences. Necessarily children and young people are largely dominated by their elders. Laws have to be imposed whether boys and girls understand them or not. And because they cannot always explain the reason for their commands, many adults see no value in having children know the reason on the occasions when they can understand it, or in having them appreciate that there always

is a reason. Such experiences are distasteful even to young children and become increasingly unpleasant as maturity and the time for self-direction approaches. It is not to be wondered at that the feeling develops that the mandates of constituted authority are an unnecessary and annoying interference with personal happiness.

Adolescent revolt against authority. Undoubtedly, in the case of many boys and girls something of the spirit of revolt against authority has been present all through childhood, but lack of physical strength has kept the individual from outward manifestation of his feelings. With the coming of adolescence the situation becomes quite different. The new strength of body and mind makes servile obedience to the will of another no longer necessary. New privileges have to be granted both because careful adult supervision of all the varied activities of life is now no longer possible and because the adolescent urge for freedom from restraint makes such supervision intolerable to the boy and girl. Now the youth's conception of the meaning of freedom becomes significant. Those boys and girls who have thought of freedom as something quite unrelated to obligations misuse their new privileges.

Here is a pupil whose entrance to junior high school has necessitated the granting of the privilege of selecting her own noontime lunch. For a long time this girl has been chafing under the supervision of her mother in the matter of diet. Now the restraints of home are removed. But this does not mean that she is freed from the restraints imposed by the laws of health. If she indulges in unwhole-

some dainties, she must expect ill effects. She quite misinterprets the nature of the new privilege when she supposes that she can now eat whatever she pleases.

Many of the difficulties growing out of the misuse of new privileges, though they are not such as ordinarily would be characterized as religious, are of significance to the religious educator. The experience mentioned above illustrates the point. Although the course of action of this pupil is manifestly unwise, some might hesitate to call it irreligious. And yet the ill health resulting from this unwise conduct makes this Intermediate girl difficult to live with, a problem which does concern the religious educator.

So too the policy of "all work and no play" does something more than "make Jack a dull boy." It makes him an irritable boy and keeps him from practicing the Christian virtue of patience. Thus, the new privilege of controlling his own time which is accorded to Jack soon after he becomes adolescent is also one in which the religious educator should interest himself. Indeed, if we grant that religion has to do with all of life and not merely with certain narrow aspects, we must enlist the co-operation of teachers in the church school in helping prepare Intermediate boys and girls for the many new privileges which are now being accorded them for the first time.

The Care of the Body

Because abounding good spirits and health are so essential to the process of character building, the problem of caring adequately for the body is one

which merits consideration. In respect to the matter of nutrition alone the ignorance and indifference at present characteristic of the American people are simply appalling. In spite of the fact that examinations for military service revealed that many young men were being held considerably below their maximum efficiency because of inadequate nourishment, there are still many boys and girls in our land who are improperly nourished.

Parents need education. The obvious place to begin this education in regard to the need of the body for food is with the parents. There are some homes in which boys and girls cannot possibly develop as they should because of the nature of the food provided. These are not always the homes where the economic pinch is felt most keenly. In many cases conditions are due to lack of knowledge in regard to what to provide rather than to any inability to provide it.

Interesting the pupil in his bodily welfare. But education of the parents is not enough. The early adolescent does not always fall in readily with the suggestions of his family. He is not always ready to co-operate with his mother's plan for a carefully balanced diet. Sometimes he refuses to partake of those portions of the meals which provide the most important nutritional elements. Then too the fact that he is not so closely supervised as before, that perhaps one meal a day is taken away from home, that he has more money and increased opportunity to patronize ice-cream parlors and confectionery shops—all this makes it imperative that the Intermediate himself be interested in this question.

Because in most localities the public schools are dealing with the matter of providing necessary information regarding the principles of nutrition, probably the church school can render its best service by contributing to the development of a wholesome attitude toward the body and a desire to make it as efficient as possible. Such an attitude will stimulate an interest not only in nutrition but in such other aspects of bodily care as personal cleanliness. Like the problem of health, this topic if properly presented makes a real appeal. The Intermediate's desire to present a fine appearance supplements the desire for good physical health, and thus a double incentive for the study of these topics is provided.

Sex education. The maturing of the body necessitates the giving of a certain amount of information regarding sex to Intermediate boys and girls. This again is a task which the church school shares with the home, the public school, and other agencies working for the welfare of early adolescents. The amount of responsibility borne by the teacher in the church school will be determined largely by local conditions. Sometimes he may have to bear almost the entire responsibility. Again, he may be able to build upon the scientific information given in the public schools, and in some instances he will be able to confine himself to the development of ideals of personal purity, leaving the more specific questions to be answered elsewhere.

In any case the methods used will depend largely upon the nature of the work to be done. Some teachers find that they can give the necessary

scientific information to the group as a whole. Others find it necessary to provide opportunity for individual conferences to answer certain questions which the pupils might not feel free to discuss in class. Each teacher will find it advisable, therefore, to make a careful study of his own situation before determining either the nature of the sex instruction he will undertake or the amount of emphasis to be put upon it. A word of caution may be in order here. It is as unwise to overemphasize the topic as it is to neglect it. Boys and girls should not be encouraged to think too much about the problem.

Developing a wholesome attitude towards clothes. The problem of clothing is another phase of the question of caring for the body which merits consideration. Clothing has two functions, protection and adornment. Although the first function is manifestly the more important, it is usually the second which stands out more prominently in the mind of the Intermediate pupil. This is indeed unfortunate. It is causing the spending of an altogether disproportionate amount of money on articles of apparel which are practically valueless as far as protection is concerned, and not enough on essentials.

The subject is a difficult one to handle in a group of Intermediates. The opinion of one or even a number of adults makes little headway against the firmly intrenched adolescent desire to wear whatever fashion decrees. Laments and protests are of scant avail. They confirm in the minds of the young the conviction that parents and teachers are careless

in regard to the matter of appearance and nourish the resolve to choose for themselves. The best way to solve the clothes problem is by working through group consciousness and not against it. If group sentiment can be developed in regard to the matter of dress, so that the pupil who goes to extremes meets with the disapproval and not with the approval of the class or department, the battle is won.

Recreation

Another group of problems which Intermediate boys and girls should think through are those having to do with recreation. The plural is used here advisedly, for the question of recreation is many-sided.

The problem of sufficient recreation. There is first of all the question of getting enough recreation. Good health demands this, and any discussion of the care of the body is not complete unless it touches upon this phase of the matter. The Intermediates' program must include enough activities to tune up their systems and send them back to the tasks of school and home with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

It is a mistake to limit the term to activities of this type, however. There is need for recreation that relaxes after the strain of work as well as for that which invigorates. In the case of Intermediate boys and girls this aspect of the recreational problem is usually the one upon which the greatest emphasis is needed. Full of enthusiasm, they often overestimate their strength and engage in too many activities of the stimulating type, with the result

that they go back to their work fatigued and not refreshed. One reason why there are so many blue Mondays in the junior high-school years is because there is often too much hilarity on Saturdays and Sundays. What is needed here is not less recreation but a different kind.

Educational by-products. There is also to be considered the matter of the educational by-products of recreation. A group of girls go on a hike, and the gossip with which they while away the time leads to broken friendships and damaged reputations. While the recreation itself was wholesome, some of its by-products were decidedly undesirable. This is a phase of the recreational problem that is often neglected. The modern emphasis upon the educational values of sport of all kinds has led us to blind our eyes to the fact that much that may be learned during the recreational period is undesirable. A boy may learn from football how to violate the rules without being caught as well as how to co-operate with his team mates. A spirit of hatred toward the opposing team may develop along with a spirit of loyalty to one's own side. The teacher cannot afford to shut his eyes to all the possibilities of recreational activities.

The charge that recreation often constitutes an undesirable interference with work is also quite justifiable. It is unfortunate that many boys and girls are adopting the attitude—now commonly accepted in certain classes of society—that the having of a good time is one of the major interests of life. We are touching here upon a very complicated question. As far as possible it is desirable to bring the

play attitude into all of life. Work will be more fruitful when undertaken with the zest and enthusiasm with which boys enter an athletic contest. But that is something different from devoting all one's time to athletic contests. With so much emphasis upon the need for recreation, so much leisure for recreation, and so many opportunities for enjoyment, there is a grave danger that boys and girls of to-day will lose all sense of the value of time. The radio renders a service by bringing good music and good speaking within the range of all, but at the same time it tempts the individual to spend an altogether disproportionate amount of time listening in even when there is nothing of much value to be heard. So too the movies, recreational and amusement parks, free concerts, all constitute at the same time an opportunity to obtain needed variety of experience and a temptation to set aside work which should be done. While it would be unfortunate if the puritanical idea that fun is sinful were revived there is need for the development of sentiment against the waste of time.

The problems in class. How are these problems to be solved? Certainly not by the futile method of holding up one's hands in horror at the kind of recreation indulged in or the amount of time given over to recreational activities by the boys and girls of to-day. Carping criticism seems only to confirm young people in their convictions and not to shake them loose from them. If the question is to be discussed, as undoubtedly it should be, the teacher can render his best service by stimulating the pupils to face the problems and to draw their own conclusions

rather than by telling them what to think or how to act. Furthermore, the formulation of principles is more desirable than a listing of the types of activities to be regarded as satisfactory, as this gives boys and girls a basis by which to evaluate any new recreational opportunities which may later present themselves.

An example of class discussion of recreation. Some interesting suggestions as to how the topic of recreation may be dealt with in class discussion are to be found in the following account of how it was handled by one teacher of Intermediate girls. At the beginning of the first class period devoted to the topic the teacher related an incident in which a young girl received and accepted an invitation to a party at which she knew she would meet some undesirable people. The story closed with the question, "Do you think she was wise?" This opened the way for a discussion, some of the pupils approving and some disapproving the girl's decision. After the discussion had proceeded for several minutes the teacher pointed out that each pupil had merely stated her own opinion in the matter and suggested that there were certain principles upon which a girl might base her decision in such a case. In order that these principles might be discovered she introduced the broader question, "What is the purpose of recreation?" The discussion of this problem proved to be of interest and consumed the remaining time of the period and it was not until the next meeting of the class that the principles desired were agreed upon and listed.

It was the protest of one of the pupils to the effect

that "not all of the things we do are in accord with those principles" that led the class to examine critically the different kinds of recreation engaged in by the girls of their age in the community. The activities discussed included swimming, horseback riding, dancing, going to shows, reading, auto riding, playing games of chance, visiting amusement parks, playing the piano or other musical instruments, and singing.

In conducting such a discussion with boys more attention might be given to athletics. By helping these young folks to see the actual dangers of overstrain, and the unchristian character of certain attitudes often developed, the teacher would be rendering a real service.

Material bearing on these problems. Here as elsewhere two types of lesson material are available. There are books and magazine articles which give information as to the difficulties as well as the values of the various recreational activities. There are stories which demonstrate the part which certain activities have played in developing the character of certain individuals. And there are also materials which are wholly inspirational in nature —stories the chief value of which is that they give pupils the courage to stick by their moral principles and say "no" to a temptation to indulge in activities which they know to be dangerous.

Some practical aspects of the problem. But lessons of any kind will be unsatisfactory if the local community does not provide the necessary facilities for wholesome recreation. The teacher's responsibility will not be discharged until he sees

that such facilities are at the disposal of the pupils. This does not necessarily mean, however, that the church school itself must assume full responsibility for the entire recreational program of its pupils. While in some instances this is the only satisfactory way of ministering to the pupil needs, in other cases it is unnecessary and even unjustifiable. There is much to be said in favor of the policy of working as citizens in the community for a community-wide program of recreation which will meet the needs of all the boys and girls and not merely those of the small groups in which they are immediately interested. Where adequate recreational facilities are provided by the community the religious educator may feel that he has done all that is necessary when he has the assurance that his own pupils are taking such advantage of existing opportunities as will be beneficial to them. This in itself may require considerable effort on his part, for it is not always easy to interest young folks in games or other activities which are new to them. In the case of one class of city girls, accustomed to depend on movies and amusement parks for relief from the monotony of home and school, it took a good deal of persuasion to induce them to try hiking, and more than one experience of hiking was necessary before they really learned to enjoy it.

While many believe that the church school should itself provide a program of recreational activities only to the extent that other agencies fail to make suitable provision, there are others who feel quite differently about it. Indeed, many leaders feel that a certain amount of recreation should

always be a feature of the life of every class because playing together constitutes one of the very best ways of getting acquainted. They hold that teachers need to see the personality of their pupils as it is revealed in play as well as in work, and that boys and girls often develop confidence in their teachers when they see how whole-heartedly they can enter into a game.

There are arguments on both sides. It is undoubtedly true that the more opportunities the teacher can find for sharing the experiences of his pupils the greater service he will be able to render. On the other hand the time at the disposal of most teachers is limited. There may be only a few hours each week free to devote to recreation and other contacts with pupils and with their parents, and to lesson preparation. It is usually far easier to get some one to supervise the play life of young people than it is to provide a teacher competent and willing to direct their thinking. Under these circumstances the policy followed by many teachers of devoting two or three hours on an evening in the middle of the week to basketball and fifteen to twenty minutes late Saturday night or early Sunday morning to lesson preparation seems entirely unjustifiable. It is important that teachers in the church school see various aspects of their work in perspective. With the present emphasis on recreation this is not an easy thing to do. We must provide adequate recreational opportunities and adequate recreational supervision by all means, but it is not necessary that this shall be at the expense of other and more essential parts of our program.

The Use of Free Time

The discussion of recreation raises the larger question of the use of free time. This is a topic in which the teacher will be much interested personally because the free-time activities of the students sometimes explain much that is otherwise hard to understand in the character of the early adolescent. Again and again sociologists have pointed out the difficulties created by increasing the leisure of the human race without providing very much that is worth while in the way of leisure-time activities. The problem begins to appear early in life; as early, in fact, as the individual is given the privilege of controlling his own time. At present this means that it occurs for many during early adolescence if not before.

Free time of Intermediates. In spite of the fact that the schedule of many Intermediates is seriously overcrowded, in the case of many others there are long periods of time unprovided for. School is over by three-thirty or thereabouts, and Intermediates do not ordinarily retire before nine or nine-thirty. Unless there are heavy home assignments, there is quite a space of free time each school day. Then there are Saturdays and Sundays during which there is no school and in addition many other holidays for which the school makes little or no provision.

Ordinarily the modern home does not offer the boy or girl much opportunity for self-expression. This statement is particularly applicable to the city or town home. Here changing conditions have eliminated many of the out-of-school activities of the age

that has passed. There are now comparatively few chores to be done after school. Groceries are delivered by a truck from the store, water is piped into the houses, fuel is supplied by the turning of a tap or the pressure of a button. The telephone has largely eliminated the errand. Street cars and automobiles more than cut in two the amount of time needed for such errands as still remain. All this means freedom for boys and girls, but freedom for what? There is little room in the modern apartment and the small city home for the fun-loving boy and girl. There is small wonder, then, that time drags slowly on Saturdays and holidays. Indeed, when we realize the seriousness of the situation we are inclined to sympathize with rather than to censure the mother who declared that her fourteen-year-old boy was sixteen and got him a vacation job not for the sake of the money he would earn, but just to give him something to do.

Adjusting the school program to fit pupil needs. Perhaps the most satisfactory solution of the problem will consist in a readjustment of schedule, so that the program of the Intermediate boy and girl will be much better balanced than it is now. There is certainly some maladjustment about the situation which leaves young folks so crowded at times that they cannot do any home assignments in religious education, and often enough they really cannot, and at other times allows them to become bored because they have not enough to do. It is hardly fair for the church school to have to accommodate itself to the schedule of other institutions and take only the time that is left. Yet often this will be the expe-

dient thing to do. If time hangs heavily in summertime and on Saturdays and holidays, surely here is a real opportunity for the church school to provide a program of activities.

Developing worth-while interests. Another solution of the problem consists in the development of interests which will make it possible for the boys and girls themselves to utilize their free time to greater advantage. Early adolescence is a time of special interest in hobbies of various sorts. Because the church school touches life at its deepest it ought to be able to create an interest in those hobbies which greatly enrich life. One pupil may become interested in such a project as collecting pictures illustrating life in some foreign land. Another may grow enthusiastic over the crafts at which some of the foreign girls are so proficient. Another may enjoy a course of reading along lines suggested during the period of lesson study. Time and effort on the part of the teacher will be required to enlist the interest and get the project started. But once the hobby has been taken up it provides a worth-while activity for many long hours, and makes little demand upon the teacher except as it is spontaneously discussed in the happy hours of fellowship which teacher and pupils always enjoy sharing with each other.

The Problem of Sunday

The use of Sunday is a problem to which teachers may well give careful consideration. There are two sides to the problem as it presents itself to the Intermediate boy and girl. As one Intermediate pupil expressed it, "After we finish talking about what

not to do on Sunday let us talk about what to do." To many boys and girls Sunday still stretches out as a long dreary day in which there are many things that you cannot do and few that you can, and this in spite of the fact that we have traveled a long, long way from the Sabbath of the Puritans. For even where parents do not usually forbid many of the activities of week days, good clothes do not permit of the rougher types of fun, and the desire of parents and neighbors for rest puts a constant check on the impulse to whistle and shout and sing.

What history tells about the use of Sunday. What are these young folks to do about Sunday with its long hours of freedom and its many repressions? One thing they can do is face the question of Sunday frankly. How can Sunday be made a day of spiritual enrichment and inspiration? The Jews of Old Testament times tried one means of doing this. They laid down laws, laws which said that you must perform certain obligations and that you must refrain from certain activities. But, as the Jews discovered, it is very difficult to regulate conduct by laws. So many new situations arose, each demanding a new regulation to fit it, that by the time of Jesus the machinery of the law became very complicated and, what was even more serious, attention became so much absorbed by the machinery that they forgot the real purpose of Sunday.

Jesus advocated a new policy in regard to Sunday, the policy of bringing all conduct in harmony with the principle, "The Sabbath was made for man." He attended the synagogue, he read the Scriptures on Sunday, but he also ministered to those who

were sick and permitted his disciples to pluck ears of corn to satisfy their hunger.

But living by principles is not easy. It involves a careful and constant scrutiny of one's conduct. So it is not hard to understand how people fell into the habit of indulging in excesses on Sunday which did not enrich or inspire life, and why from time to time there have been new efforts to regulate Sabbath observance by law.

We are now in a period of revulsion against the idea of a legally regulated observance of the Sabbath. We see clearly that it is quite possible to keep the Sabbath according to rule and yet not to receive any great spiritual benefit. So once again every man has the privilege of deciding within broad limits what he shall do. If he prefers an automobile ride or a game of baseball to attendance at church he is at liberty in most localities to shape his course of action accordingly. But this new liberty is bringing its own difficulties. For many people automobile rides and baseball games are crowding the deeper spiritual values out of life. In this busy age there is greater need than ever before for a day of rest and spiritual inspiration. Our liberty requires, therefore, that we subject our conduct to the most careful scrutiny if we are to avoid the futility of mere rules and yet preserve the value of guiding principles.

Other methods of attack. Once more, classroom discussions will be inadequate if a definite effort is not made to provide opportunities for spiritual enrichment. There can be no doubt that there would be more young people in our church services if

serious attention were paid to the matter of planning the services to meet their needs. On the other hand it is also true that outside distractions are permitted to keep pupils away from services which they would really enjoy. Parents should co-operate with teachers by recognizing the claim of the church and the church school. Intermediate pupils should certainly not be kept away from church by the plans of the family.

Furthermore, Sunday cannot be a satisfactory day in a home where each member of the family thinks only of himself. The parents must take the initiative in this matter and plan or at least make possible certain activities for the younger members. With very little extra work John or Mary can have a chum in for an hour's visit or even to share in the evening meal and attend evening service with the family. Parents who take the first step in this direction will have little difficulty in enlisting the co-operation of boys and girls in making the day a happier one for other members of the family.

Reading

Because of the increased publication and the wider distribution of printed material, reading has become one of the most popular leisure-time activities of Intermediate boys and girls. While the present situation has advantages over the not far distant past when books were a rarity it has its disadvantages also. Unfortunately, other agencies than those interested in the welfare of youth are circulating books and magazines, many of which are unwholesome. Those who have investigated the

reading habits of early adolescent boys and girls have made some startling disclosures in regard to the kind of literature that is being circulated in certain quarters.

Methods of dealing with the reading problem. The problem is both difficult and urgent. Something may be done by the method of censorship of libraries and news stands. Even at its best, however, this plan is only a partial remedy. There seem to be always available hidden sources through which pernicious reading material is circulated. For this reason it is important that definite effort be made to stimulate an interest in better books and develop standards of taste.

In some situations the organization of book clubs has contributed to the solution of the problem. These clubs have constituted part of the midweek activities of the pupils. In the discussions the members recommend books to each other. In some instances the program of the club has been organized around the project of compiling a list of books to be placed in the department library for the use of those entering the department later; in other instances a loan collection of books has been made up from the private libraries of the members. Either plan may be commended for adaptation to any local situation.

Since there are still some communities in which the social conscience has not been aroused to the need of providing library facilities, the church school may need to interest itself also in this phase of the reading problem. There are two ways of remedying such a situation, that of working through the com-

munity as a whole and procuring a community library, and that of reviving the old Sunday-school library. In some communities the latter plan seems most satisfactory. A church which has become a real community center may find it desirable to operate a community reading room, perhaps constituting itself a branch of the city or State library system. In most localities the best procedure is considered to be that of co-operation in the establishment of adequate community library facilities.

Because there are still many people to whom the cost of books seems excessive, there is often need for an educational campaign dealing with the relative values of various desirable commodities. Very much more is being spent by the American people for tobacco or chewing gum than for good books. Books are expensive but not nearly so expensive as many useless or positively harmful articles for which much greater sums are now being spent. The community which invests liberally in good literature and bends its energy toward stimulating an interest in it is the one that is going to contribute leaders for the social order of the future.

The Use of Money

Another topic that needs careful attention is that of the use of money. Since boys and girls of Intermediate age begin to have greater freedom in the handling of money, they are particularly in need of help in learning how to use it well. If they do not develop wise discrimination in their saving and their spending, they will probably join the great army of people who invest on the basis of passing

interests without careful consideration of the needs of the future. With shop windows becoming increasingly alluring boys and girls must be well poised indeed if they are to be kept from squandering their allowances. The whole problem of values quite properly finds a place in the program of religious education.

Training for stewardship. Thrift is not the only objective in our work, nor is it the most important. The Christian religion recognizes the principle of stewardship of personal possessions. Money, like talent, is not to be used for personal gratification alone. It enriches life most when it is shared. A well-rounded education will include training in giving as well as in spending.

Real training in giving demands that the pupils have actual experience of giving. Much that goes under this name is not training in giving at all, but training in carrying out the plans of someone else. When the administrative officers assign a quota to a class to be devoted to some object which the class has not selected, this is not an opportunity for the pupils to experience giving. No class and no individual gets a real thrill out of making a donation without having actually felt and responded to an appeal for need. The church will never raise up a generation of giving Christians until it makes provision for the participation of its youth in the making of its financial plans. There are many Intermediate workers to-day who feel that the administering of all the money brought by the pupils to the church school should be in the hands of the boys and girls themselves. While in some instances

they may not seem ready for such a responsibility, they should certainly be represented on all committees charged with the handling of the finances of the department.

Pupil ownership necessary. It is necessary to remember also that a pupil cannot have an experience of giving unless he has something to give. One learns little of the cost of giving and less of its "blessedness" when one donates money which belongs to someone else. And that is just what many Intermediate pupils do. The money which they bring to the church school is not theirs but their parents'. Only those who earn the money or who have allowances of their own out of which they are required to provide themselves with certain necessities are really learning the lesson of stewardship. Once more, then, good educational procedure demands that teaching reach out and touch the home. In a number of instances the teacher will find his work seriously hampered unless the parents are willing to co-operate by adjusting family expenditures so that boys and girls may really have something to give.

Education

With so much freedom of choice in other matters it is not surprising that Intermediates chafe against the restraints imposed upon them by the schools. The fact that education is compulsory makes them forget that it is also a privilege. Where circumstances permit, a large number of early adolescent boys and girls drop out of school and of those who continue in attendance many go about their work half-heartedly, wasting their own time and that of

their teachers. A part of the difficulty, as schoolteachers themselves are quite free to admit, lies in the fact that the schools of the past have not been adjusted to the needs of the pupils. But the reorganization of the schools will solve the problem only if it contributes to the development of a better attitude toward education. The boys and girls who derive the most benefit from the schools are those who appreciate their value. Nor is it enough that they think of its commercial value alone, although this should not be ignored. The best schools conceive of their purpose as the preparation of the individual for all of life's activities. Boys and girls should be given an appreciation of those subjects which enrich life as well as of those which contribute to the commercial efficiency of the individual.

Faithful and honest work. Where the proper attitude toward the schools has been developed there should be no need to consider the question of faithful and honest work. Yet we do find many boys and girls who are eager to have the advantages of an education and are even planning to go to college who do not hesitate on occasion to do less than their best work. Perhaps in demanding steady application to the problems at hand we are asking too much of these boys and girls. But there is a real question whether it would not be better to require a better type of work for a shorter period of time each day than to permit them to do work of an inferior quality. The teacher in the church school is concerned with this problem because the attitude toward work developed in school at this period is often carried over into other activities in life. His

opportunities for dealing with the problems are necessarily limited. But there is little doubt that the church school could do more in this matter than is usually accomplished. A wide-awake teacher will find opportunity for introducing the topic into the class discussions. He will be on the alert for story materials which will give incentive for better work. And he will never be satisfied to accept second grade work on assignments.

Vocational interests. Although the question of vocations does not become acute at this period, many boys and girls have already developed certain vocational interests. This interest in the future is somewhat increased by the introduction of elective subjects into the junior high school. Most second- and third-year Intermediates have plans at least as to whether they will complete the high-school course, and as to whether or not they will go on to college, or business school, or will find employment as soon as high-school days are over. The necessity for making decisions in regard to the choice of subjects of study makes the discussion of the question of vocations pertinent. Although it is too soon to make a final decision regarding the choice of life-work, discussions concerning the opportunities offered by different types of work in respect to remuneration, development of skill and initiative, and service for others may well find a place in the program of work of Intermediate pupils.

Relation to Constituted Authority

Mention should be made of still another major problem in our educational program. Early adoles-

cent boys and girls are becoming increasingly conscious of the place of law in life and are likely to be greatly irritated by it. They are normally much absorbed by their own interests and needs and by those of their associates, and it is difficult for them to realize that there are other individuals with interests and needs quite different from theirs who also demand certain privileges. They resent rules or laws because they cannot see that only the careful enforcement of regulations makes it possible for people to live safely and harmoniously together.

Method of approach. In discussing the question in the class group the point of departure may well be the place of law in baseball or other organized games. A little skillful leadership should readily bring out the fact that rules are indispensable in any sort of organized play. Discussion might then go on to the question of the value of law in such affairs as the regulation of traffic. It is, of course, a purely arbitrary arrangement whereby we drive to the right instead of to the left when meeting other people, but disregard of this accepted method would shortly convert the well-ordered traffic of the city into a chaos in which progress would be impossible. Laws of possession of property may at times seem to be a good deal of a nuisance and yet how long would even boys and girls be able to get along without some sort of agreement regarding the respect of property?

Not all laws that have been made or that now exist are just and good. That fact should be frankly admitted. Indeed, only as those who are coming up into citizenship prepare themselves for participa-

tion in the movement for improvement in our legal enactments can we promote the type of system to which we eagerly look forward. It is not only permissible but highly desirable that we should discuss these matters with our pupils. The question will undoubtedly come up as to the attitude that should be taken to laws that are evidently unjust. The first impulse of the pupil will probably be to say that we should use our judgment as to which laws we shall respect and which shall be disregarded. This, of course, is a dangerous policy and the discussion should not stop until the fallacy of such an argument has been made evident. With discussion of the enactment of law should come, of course, the consideration of the means that have been established for its administration. Sometimes our legal machinery moves so slowly that we are exasperated and we are sorely tempted to take into our own hands the administration of justice. Occasionally good may be accomplished by such a step, but it is an exceedingly dangerous plan of procedure and must inevitably lead to all sorts of excesses and difficulties. Appreciation of the value of such legal machinery as we possess is of great importance, especially to pupils of this age.

What the Bible teaches regarding law. For the discussion of these topics we have available a large amount of usable Bible material. In connection with the discussion of law observance a study of the development of the early Hebrew law will be found of interest and of great value. We find there a development of law out of the practical everyday needs of the people. It will be of interest also to

study the Pharisaic interpretation of law and the difficulties involved therein. All of us are tempted at times to hold to the letter of the law but to interpret it in such a way that the spirit is forgotten and the law ceases to perform its function.

Teachers' treatment of pupils. Good educational procedure demands that our treatment of the pupils be in harmony with the principles set forth in the class discussions. All purely arbitrary methods of dealing with the boys and girls should be abandoned. The pupils should be recognized as citizens of a democracy. They should be given opportunity to participate in the making of regulations in the group. The largest possible measure of democracy should be practiced, not only in the class group but in other groups in which these boys and girls participate. In making this adjustment the co-operation of parents and all others touching the life of the pupil in a formative way should be enlisted. For this is the most fruitful method of bringing boys and girls to an appreciation of the need for law and the value of it in everyday living. Once this lesson has been learned, the danger of privilege has been largely eliminated.

For Further Study

1. What opportunities for the exercise of pupil initiative does your church school offer? How do the pupils respond to these opportunities? Do you feel that too much or too little freedom is granted? Suggest methods by which greater self-reliance may be developed.

2. If your opinion was asked regarding the advisability of employing a recreational director for your

church school, what would you advise? Mention briefly all of the points which you would bring both for and against the plan.

3. To what extent do you feel that the program of your pupils is overcrowded? To what extent does it seem insufficient? What adjustments in the program would you recommend?

4. Plan a class discussion with a group of Intermediate pupils that will develop a better attitude toward the value of time.

5. In any course of lessons for Intermediate pupils pick out what you consider to be a good lesson on each of the following topics:

(*a*) Recreation.

(*b*) The observance of Sunday.

(*c*) Reading.

(*d*) Thrift.

6. What do you know of the kind of literature your pupils are reading. Do you consider the reading habits of your pupils satisfactory? Do you feel that your knowledge of their reading habits is adequate for the formation of such a judgment? What methods would you use to discover more accurately what the reading interests of your pupils are? What value can you see in making such a survey?

7. Suggest some methods for the development of discrimination on the part of the pupils in regard to literature and moving-picture shows.

8. What is your estimate of the plan of having the general treasurer of the church school report at regular intervals to the Intermediate Department regarding the nature of the expenditures which have been made?

9. In your Intermediate Department does the giving of money appear to be a perfunctory form or an act of worship? Suggest ways in which it might be made more of an act of worship than it is.

10. What value can you see in discussing with Intermediates the general topic, "The use of money"? Has your experience led you to feel that this is a timely topic for discussion with your own class? What points would you emphasize in such a discussion?

11. Name two stories which would help to develop a better attitude toward education.

12. What is the general attitude toward education among the early adolescents of your community? What would you do if you found that one of your pupils had been guilty of truancy?

13. What justification can you see for discussing the rights of constituted authority with Intermediate boys and girls?

References for Supplementary Reading

Psychology of the Junior High School Pupil, Pechstein and McGregor, Chapters XVIII, XXI-XXIII.

Outlines of Child Study, Gruenberg, pp. 82-90, 132-150, 185-195.

Law and Freedom in the School, Coe.

CHAPTER V

ACHIEVING THE GREAT PURPOSE

A FINE character consists of something more than a collection of good ideas and habits. This is a matter of common observation. We are continually meeting individuals whose lives seem to lack a certain vital quality, but in the separate items of whose conduct we can see little that is wrong. Such people may be honorable and industrious, but they do not accomplish much that is worth while, nor do they exert any considerable influence on their associates. In contrast to these are other individuals who do make a strong impression upon their social group and regarding whom we do not hesitate to speak in terms of highest commendation. The difference between the two is largely one of general attitude toward life. The former seem to have no definite objectives, while the latter work deliberately and consistently for certain large purposes. These give unity and meaning to all their experiences. They make life seem something greater than a number of unrelated tasks. Such an organizing center is indispensable if the individual is to develop his highest possibilities. No one may be said to have a fine character whose habits and attitudes are not brought together around some great ideal.

As Christians we are committed to the belief that the only satisfying purpose which may come into a

life is the purpose of bringing one's conduct into harmony with the principles of Jesus and of giving oneself unsparingly in the service of others as he did. We admit that useful lives have been dominated by lesser ideals. But we feel that the more abundant life of which Jesus spoke can be attained only by the most thoroughgoing commitment of oneself to his way of living. The desire to achieve distinction or success has brought a measure of happiness to many, but where it has been divorced from the realization that talents have been given by God and should be dedicated to him it has kept many from the highest happiness. Even a career devoted to the service of others will be most fruitful if avowedly Christian. For this reason we who are teachers recognize as the great purpose of our work the securing of life commitments on the part of our pupils.

Life Commitments During Early Adolescence

A period for decisions. The problem arises as to the best time for making a life commitment. Most people agree that young children are too immature to take such a step. There are also some who question whether early adolescents are ready for it. They wonder whether it is wise to expect boys and girls in the early teens to make a decision which will affect their whole lives. One answer which may be made to this question is that whether we wish it or not early adolescent boys and girls do develop attitudes which will determine their point of view throughout life. The period is bound to be a critical one. Additional freedom from external

control throws boys and girls upon their own resources. If they do not catch a large vision of life, they either become mere drifters or allow unworthy purposes to dominate them. Altogether too many of the early adolescents of to-day are indifferent to the finer ideals of life. Altogether too many of them are interested primarily in gay clothes and "a good time." The alternative before us is not that of forcing a decision or deferring it until later, but of giving a desirable bent to life or of allowing it to develop as we would not care to have it do.

A life purpose needed. Moreover, the early adolescent needs the steadying influence of a great purpose not only for the sake of his future but also to help him through the difficulties which beset him now. Undoubtedly, there would be much less of impatience with the routine of home and school if early adolescents could be made to realize that as they perform their daily tasks they are preparing themselves to share in bringing to fulfillment God's plans for the world. Quite possibly there would be greater dependability if there were a recognition of the value of responsibilities. Perhaps also there would be a greater degree of self-control. For although we grant that in many cases there is a physical basis for depression and instability of temper and in others there is enough of misunderstanding by parents and associates to account for moodiness and irritability, we know also that those who have resources within themselves find self-control possible even under difficult circumstances. The Intermediate pupil who has definitely acknowledged himself to be the child of God may be a constant

source of joy to his friends, even though he is passing through the perplexing period of early adolescence.

Readiness to respond. We find further support for the conviction that the question of life commitment should be brought before early adolescents in the fact that boys and girls of this age seem to respond readily to an appeal of this kind. Investigations which have been made in regard to this matter indicate that a large number of professing Christians have taken a definite stand during early adolescence. The testimony of these persons is to the effect that the decisions made at this time were associated with a real religious experience. So convincing has their testimony been that students of the problem have been led to the conclusion that there occurs at some time during the early teens a period of special sensitivity to religious appeal.

The appeal of the Christian religion. It is evident also that the Christian religion is of such a nature as to make a strong appeal to the Intermediate boy or girl. Intermediates are naturally hero-worshipers. There seems to be no limit to their ability to lavish admiration upon the hero who commends himself to them. It is but to be expected that they would respond to the appeal to serve the One whose heroic qualities stand out pre-eminently in the history of mankind.

Further, the Christian religion offers Intermediate boys and girls just the opportunity for achievement which they crave. One of the big problems of the period is to find enough challenging tasks to keep these energetic boys and girls busy.

When the Intermediate pupil accepts Christianity he finds plenty of difficult and absorbing tasks. Many appeals for service to others come to him and he continually faces the necessity of bringing his own life under the control of the new standards he has accepted.

Of course, early adolescence is not the only time when Christianity makes a strong appeal. It is a matter of common experience that people of any age may come into relationship with Christ. But it is important that every early adolescent pupil be helped to face the issue and to appreciate the value of definitely pledging his allegiance to God and of recognizing himself as a Christian.

How the Call to Life Consecration Comes

It will be pertinent to raise a question at this point as to the way in which the call to life consecration may come to an early adolescent boy or girl. In answering this question we can make sure that the experiences from which we draw our inferences have been genuine and have withstood the test of time if we consult certain mature individuals who have been professing Christians since early adolescence.

Different types of experience. It is interesting to note that when we ask people to describe the experiences which led to the consecration of their lives to the ideals of Jesus we get three types of replies. In one group we have those who describe the experience as something very unusual, something very different from anything else that has ever occurred in their lives. Because of its unique-

ness, as well as because of the far-reaching character of its results, it may be characterized as a crisis experience.

There are others who recall a time of deep conviction, but who tell us that there were also other experiences in their lives similar in nature to the great crisis, although not of so great significance. For these there was a series of "mountain-top" experiences. In some cases the greatest crisis came during early adolescence, while in others the early adolescent awakening was but a prelude to a more vivid realization of kinship with God which came with maturer years.

But there are still others who cannot now recall having experienced anything which they would care to characterize as a conversion experience. Raised in a Christian atmosphere, carefully guided during childhood, they seem always to have been conscious of a desire to serve God and to bring their lives into harmony with the ideals of Jesus. Periods of deep emotional significance there undoubtedly were in such lives, but no occasion stands out in memory as the great experience of the religious life. Yet these too testify to the power of God to give meaning to life and to fortify the spirit with courage to meet all vicissitudes.

What, then, does the testimony of these people tell us in regard to religious development? First, that all do not develop alike. While undoubtedly everyone has times of special consecration, for some spiritual growth is much steadier and more regular than for others.

Phases of religious development. Another infer-

ence that may be drawn is that there are two distinct phases of religious development, the times of crisis and the periods of slow growth. Some, as we have seen, recall only the crisis experiences, others only the slow and steady growth. But it seems justifiable to assume that everyone passes through periods of slower as well as of more rapid development. People who do not remember having passed through a conversion experience can recall certain especially rich experiences. And those whose memory of the times of crisis is most vivid realize that progress was made in the long period which intervened between these. Indeed, spiritual growth seems always to take place in a rhythmic manner, times of great enrichment alternating with periods of less intense growth.

Moreover, there seems to be a close relationship between these two phases of spiritual growth. The crisis experience usually comes as a culmination of a period of slow and steady growth and leads directly to a later period of less intense but none the less real development.

The relation between the two phases of growth is plainly seen in the experience of a high-school freshman whose decision to make Jesus the master of his life was formulated one Good Friday morning when one of the ministers of his city gave an Easter address in the high-school auditorium. Now there was little in this address that was new to the boy. With all that the speaker said about the significance of Easter, he was already familiar. But the speaker succeeded in interpreting for him in a new way these things he had previously learned about

Jesus, and when this new light was thrown upon these facts, emotions and aspirations which had been taking shape through long weeks and months became crystallized into a resolve. Outstanding as the experience was, it was definitely linked up with what had gone before and what followed it. For just as the patient study which preceded it had enriched it, so did the study which followed further illuminate it. The boy was eager now to learn how to translate his new resolve into practical terms. In addition to giving meaning to the crisis the lessons which followed made possible intelligent participation in later experiences of renewed consecration.

Helping Intermediates Face the Problem of Life Commitment

But what has all this to do with teaching? A great deal, if we recognize as the central aim of the teacher the bringing of the purpose to serve God into the lives of the pupils. The obtaining of life decisions is the teacher's ultimate goal. The development of habits and attitudes is rather a futile business unless it contributes to this central aim.

Relation between teaching and evangelism. Moreover, the obtaining of life decisions is really an educational problem. We make a great mistake when we try to differentiate between teaching and evangelism. Even as all teaching worthy of the name keeps the evangelistic aim central, so all evangelism which accomplishes results is educational. It develops latent possibilities. It utilizes educational principles. Its methodology is fundamentally that of teaching.

Further, the teacher's opportunities lay the responsibility for this part of the religious development of his pupils upon him. Usually the teacher in the church school knows the boys and girls more intimately than the departmental superintendent, the pastor, or any other officer of the church or church school. Quite often he knows them more intimately than do their day-school teachers or even their parents. Many boys and girls grow accustomed to looking forward to the brief period on Sunday morning as a time when they can discuss questions which they would hesitate to raise at any other time. The happy fellowship in the class group makes them feel that the teacher is one who will listen with sympathy and understanding to any confession of wrongdoing or doubt they may care to make. So the teacher's position confers on him the right to face with them this most important, intimate, and personal question of all and, indeed, makes it his duty to do so.

With the majority of teachers the difficulty is not that they do not appreciate the importance of the problem, but that they feel themselves incapable of coping with it. They hesitate to open the question with their pupils lest they blunder. They shrink from seeming to dictate regarding the time or the manner in which God will speak to his children. They know that God has many ways of working, that some find him in a glorious sunset or a majestic waterfall, that he speaks to others through a fine poem or a great painting, that he comes to many when they are quite alone and to others when they are surrounded by a great company. They hope,

therefore, that their pupils will be able to fight the issue through without their help. And sometimes they do. But there are many early adolescents who do not hear God when he calls, who have never learned how to respond to him. These need the help of a sympathetic friend who will show them how to be sensitive to the call and will encourage them to face the issue squarely when it comes.

Mistakes to be avoided. While each teacher must adapt his methods to the needs of his own group, experience has demonstrated that there are certain things to be avoided if the work is to be effective. In the first place it is important that the decision be not made on the basis of emotion alone. This does not mean that emotion may be eliminated from the experience. Far from it. The story that will make a boy or girl ashamed of past evil conduct, and be an incentive for a change, has a place in the evangelistic program of the church school. But a moderate use of this kind of material in conjunction with other methods which encourage the pupil to think through the problem conscientiously is something quite different from playing upon the emotions until boys and girls are stampeded into making promises which they are not ready to fulfill.

This is one reason why work with small groups or with individuals is usually considered to be of more significance than work with large masses. The enthusiasm generated by the big crowd is likely to sweep boys and girls into making premature decisions. We may not dispense with such enthusiasm altogether. A certain amount of it is wholesome. But it must not be allowed to take the place of the

less spectacular work of the classroom and of personal talks with the pupils.

In the second place, it is necessary to guard against too much urging. There is enough independence of will at any time of life to make the method an unsatisfactory one, but it is of very doubtful value in work with Intermediate pupils. Some few may be persuaded through much urging to take the step, but unless there is real conviction back of the decision it will be of little value. With most early adolescents overurging will influence them against making a favorable decision.

The same kind of a result often follows when an appeal is made in a special service, even though the leaders consistently refrain from using pressure or from playing unduly upon the emotions. The very fact that a service has as its purpose the obtaining of decisions leads many young people to suspect that someone is planning to take advantage of them. Many boys and girls who will participate readily in class discussions and enter whole-heartedly into the regular worship service of the department prove unresponsive in a service or a lesson designedly evangelistic in nature. This emphasizes the importance of working through regular channels and of making the lessons in which this problem is discussed as much as possible like the other lessons. It also raises a question regarding the policy followed in many schools of putting a large amount of time and effort on preparation for special services and really neglecting the evangelistic opportunities afforded by the regular work. It seems justifiable to suppose that if a distribution of time could be effected allow-

ing more attention to be paid to preparing for each Sunday's work and putting less effort on the making of special appeals better results would be secured.

Another mistake to be avoided is that of expecting all to respond to the same kind of an appeal. We ought to know enough about our pupils to realize that what will work with one will not work with another. One pupil will receive his greatest inspiration from the informal talks around a camp fire, another from the more systematic study in class, and another from a fine devotional service.

Variation in response. Nor should we be disappointed if all do not respond in the same way. Boys and girls will be found to vary in this respect as they do in others. Those who are naturally demonstrative will be eager to talk about their new experience and to share their happiness with their friends. But those who are usually shy may be so reticent about what is happening to them that we may wonder whether the experience is a genuine one.

Similarly, we must not expect all to respond at the same time. Plan as we may, there will nearly always be some pupils who will not take a definite stand in regard to the acceptance of Christianity before they leave the Intermediate Department. It is natural for some to develop spiritually much more slowly than others. It is unfortunate when this is not recognized and pupils who are not ready to take the step are made to feel that they have been careless or indifferent. There is more respect due a pupil who conscientiously and thoughtfully concludes that he is not ready to call himself a Chris-

tian than to one who glibly asserts that he is without realizing what is involved in his assertion. Yet many have been deeply hurt by the implication, often unconsciously made, that those who do not join the church or take a definite stand are at fault. The situation is a difficult one to handle since it is not easy to determine what is back of the pupil's attitude and whether he is really facing his problems. The teacher should school himself to recognize progress in spiritual growth whether or not it results immediately in the making of a definite decision.

Further, it is important that we do not attempt to limit any pupil to a single crisis experience. Every individual should have opportunity for many experiences of deep significance. While not every worship service will result in the making of great life decisions, every service should be an occasion of spiritual enrichment for many pupils. And the times of special import such as Thanksgiving, Easter, Christmas, the various patriotic festivals, the occasion when church or school is dedicated or when the body of a beloved teacher or friend is laid away in its last resting place, all these may be evangelistic in the best sense of the term. Every teacher should realize this.

And, finally, recognition must be given to the value of periods of slow growth. Many teachers feel that their work counts for little unless they are putting on some special service or teaching lessons which deal directly with the question of life consecration. They do not recognize that other courses in which perhaps nothing at all is said about this very vital

question actually make the crisis experience richer when it comes. The teacher who puts his best efforts into each lesson and each course and provides a broad and comprehensive program is providing for his pupils most satisfactory conditions for growth in the religious life.

How One School Solved the Problem

What, then, should be the policy of the school in regard to this matter? Should it be left entirely to the discretion of the teacher to raise the question of decision when he sees best and to face it as he may find advisable? Should the practice of holding a general Decision Day service be abandoned? Should early adolescent boys and girls be encouraged to attend evangelistic services, or should special services adapted to the needs of these pupils be held? Some of these questions have to do with the administrative work of the school, but all of them also closely concern the work of the teacher. For while they do not determine administrative policies teachers are usually consulted in regard to them, and they should certainly have convictions concerning these problems. Perhaps instead of attempting to answer these questions in general terms for all teachers it will be of more advantage to leave them with the individual teacher to answer for himself in the light of his own experience and of the foregoing discussion. Instead of a general answer there is included here a description of the methods used by one Intermediate Department in solving this problem. The plan was made during the summer months, presented to the department staff during the fall,

and suggested a course of action for the entire year.

Discussion of objectives. Because the lesson study was considered so essential a part of the program the objectives of each class for the entire year were the first item discussed. In this part of the discussion special attention was given to the objectives for twelve-year-olds of the course to be studied. It was on the life of Jesus and had been especially planned with a view to meeting the normal adolescent sensitivity to religious appeal. The purposes of the courses for the two later years were also discussed, so that the teachers of those courses might see the service which they were to render boys and girls who a year or two before had studied the life of Jesus and been in an environment especially designed to stimulate a life decision.

The discussion of teaching objectives was followed by a discussion of objectives for the worship services, and of a tentative plan for the opening services for the year which was presented at this time. Full discussion of this outline by the teachers was encouraged for two reasons: first, because the teachers know the pupils' needs and should be in a position to make valuable suggestions; and, second, because the services are most helpful if the teachers comment on them occasionally, or take advantage of a pupil's criticism to introduce the topic of the service into the class discussion, and this can be done intelligently only if they understand the objectives and the general nature of the plan.

Co-operation of parents. Another item considered at this time was the question of enlisting

the co-operation of the parents. A small number of parents' meetings were planned for the year, the programs of which were designed to keep the parents more closely in touch with the objectives of the school, particularly those mentioned above. Teachers were advised to call on the parents in order to win their confidence and to get more light if possible on the actual needs of individual pupils.

The special problems of certain pupils were also considered at this meeting. A list was made of all those who were not professing Christians, particularly of those among the older pupils who had been in the department before and had not responded to such appeals as had been made previously. Reasons why these had hesitated to take a definite stand were made available, so far as they were known, to the teachers who would now be responsible for them. As the year advanced later conferences were held when accounts of progress were given and problems more thoroughly discussed.

Decisions throughout the year. When at last the regular Decision Day drew near all of the decisions to be recorded for the year had been made. The Decision Day service became, then, really an acknowledgment service in which those who had already claimed the privilege of calling themselves Christians welcomed those who had recently taken their vows.

A plan for each situation. This plan was made to fit a local situation and is not offered for general use. Perhaps it would not be going too far to say that no plan prepared by anyone outside a local situation could minister to the needs of that situa-

tion as effectively as a program formulated by the local workers themselves. Only by studying carefully the problems and temperaments of the members of his class can the individual teacher put himself in the position most effectively to stimulate the making of supreme decisions and thus achieve his great purpose in teaching.

For Further Study

1. What would you say to the boy or girl who came to you in great distress because he or she had never had the kind of religious experience which many other people declare themselves to have had?
2. Suppose that one of your pupils claimed to be passing through a conversion experience and seemed to be taking it very calmly. How would you decide whether or not the experience was a really vital one?
3. Think of a typical Decision Day service that you have observed and state whether you now consider it to have been entirely satisfactory. What modifications, if any, would you suggest and why would you introduce them?
4. What contribution is the course of study which you are planning to use likely to make toward the religious development of the pupils?
5. What would you say to one of your pupils whom you found to be worried about death?
6. In utilizing the following stories from the life of Jesus for the purpose of securing life commitments which of the alternative points given would you emphasize?

(1) The stilling of the storm.
   (*a*) Jesus' power over nature.
   (*b*) The contrast between the poise of Jesus and the excitement of the disciples.
(2) The marriage at Cana.
   (*a*) Jesus' interest in the social life of his friends.
   (*b*) Jesus' power over material things.
(3) The feeding of the five thousand.
   (*a*) The marvel of providing for the needs of so many out of such small resources.
   (*b*) The fact that Jesus at the close of a busy day took thought for the welfare of others.
(4) The baptism.
   (*a*) Jesus' own consciousness of the call from God.
   (*b*) The appearance of the dove and the voice from heaven.
(5) The resurrection.
   (*a*) The empty tomb.
   (*b*) The renewal of confidence and faith in the disciples.

7. What episodes from the life of Jesus do you feel will make the strongest appeal to Intermediate pupils?

8. Prepare a talk to be given to a group of Intermediates on the heroism of Jesus.

References for Supplementary Reading

Intermediate Method in the Church School, McKibben, Chapter X.
The Church's Program for Young People, Mayer, Chapter XVII.
Girlhood and Character, Moxcey, Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER VI

HELPING INTERMEDIATES TO LEARN

We have a much used slogan, "Experience is the best teacher." Most people interpret this to mean that we learn better when actually engaged in the affairs of life than when theorizing about them in some form of school. Now, it is unquestionably true that in many cases the learning that takes place incidentally in the normal activities of life is more economical, more permanent, and more valuable than much of our school learning, but the slogan has for us a deeper significance. The most important point to be noticed is that, haphazard as this kind of learning may seem to be, here as elsewhere nature works in accordance with well-defined laws, and the teacher does his best work when he, either consciously or unconsciously, incorporates these principles in his methods.

Typical cases of habit formation. The method by which people learn under circumstances not definitely calculated to further learning may be discovered through an analysis of cases where such learning has taken place. Let us consider two quite typical instances. An Intermediate girl developed a new set of habits in regard to dress apparently as a result of certain uncomplimentary remarks which a young woman whose approval she valued made concerning her appearance. A freshman in

high school recently developed the habit of taking small sums of money from his mother's purse without permission.

Although in respect to outward circumstances these two cases are unlike, in respect to the method by which the changes took place there is a marked similarity between them. In both cases the initial step in the development of the new habit consisted in an experience which made former conduct seem unsatisfactory. In the case of the girl the remark of her friend made her dissatisfied with her appearance and consequently with the methods of grooming which it was quite evident contributed to that appearance.

In the case of the boy the experience was somewhat more complicated, but the principle was the same. Throughout childhood the boy had had only a very uncertain supply of spending money, being dependent entirely upon the whim of his parents. The older he grew the more keenly he felt the need for a definite and regular allowance. With his entrance to high school the situation became more acute. Various appeals for money were being made, and he was not in a position to say how much he could contribute. Matters came to a crisis when subscriptions were being taken for the procuring of new suits for the football team. The boy was anxious to atone for his earlier failure to co-operate with his fellows by giving a generous contribution. His parents, on the other hand, regarded the expenditure as uncalled for and would not permit him to give anything.

In each of these two cases, dissatisfaction with

the existing situation provided an incentive for experimenting with new types of conduct. The girl followed some suggestions of the beauty editor in a woman's magazine, and the boy, happening to notice his mother's pocketbook lying on the living-room table, yielded to the impulse of the moment and took the money which he felt should have been given to him.

Again, both cases are alike in this one respect—that the new conduct brought satisfaction. The girl was herself aware of an improvement in her appearance, which was confirmed either by favorable comments on the part of her associates or at least by the absence of unfavorable ones. The boy's satisfaction, on the other hand, was tinged with dissatisfaction. He was not altogether comfortable about what he had done, but on the whole he felt happier about meeting the other boys than he would have felt if he had been unable to co-operate with them.

In both cases the habit was established only after several repetitions of the act, each attended with satisfaction. For many mornings the girl was on the point of slipping back into her former careless methods of grooming. And the boy had committed many petty thefts before he was able to shake off the feeling of dissatisfaction which made him want to put the money back.

The method of habit formation as exemplified in these two cases is clear cut. First there is a stimulus to a certain type of reaction. The reaction brings satisfaction and the tendency to act in this way is formed. Each succeeding repetition of the act, if attended with satisfaction, strengthens the

tendency. And after a number of such repetitions the tendency has become so firmly fixed that the action may be unmistakably recognized as having become habitual.

Universal basis of habit formation. Further investigation will reveal the fact that all habits develop in this way. This is true whether we use the term "habit" in the narrower sense as referring only to conduct or in the wider sense as including attitudes which are really habits of thought.

The Place of Activity in Learning

When we speak of "learning by experience" we usually think of the learner as engaged in some kind of physical activity in contrast to the "passive" condition of the pupil in the traditional school room. Many educators have become sharply conscious of the contrast and have come to feel that without the physical activity that characterizes ordinary life projects educational effort is largely futile. They have taken from psychology the slogan "No impression without expression" and have coupled with it the motto of "learning by doing."

An overemphasis on physical activity. This emphasis on physical activity has literally transformed much of our modern education, and there is general agreement among educators that the change was needed. We have unquestionable evidence that the changes have brought improvement. On the other hand there is reason to believe that many have gone to an extreme in their emphasis on physical activity and that at the present time we need to be reminded that it is not the only factor

in the learning process. Indeed, there may be important learning with only a minimum of physical activity.

Place of emotion in learning. One of the neglected elements in learning is feeling or emotion. In the cases examined above it was evident that emotion played an important part in the learning process; indeed, it would not be too much to assert that the emotions experienced by these young people were the critical factors in their experiences. If the girl had not become dissatisfied with her earlier ways, she would not have changed them. If the boy had not been a little more uncomfortable about taking the money and a little less pleased at the attitude of his companions toward his generosity he would probably not have stolen any more. So, we see, feeling was important not only for the initiation of the new behavior, but equally so in the subsequent experiences which contributed to the fixing of the habit.

Thinking as an element in learning. Thinking is yet another element in the learning process. Because the only thing we can see of another person is his physical activity we often overlook the place that thinking has in his living. Indeed, thinking has probably much more to do with our physical activity than most of us realize. Even when we are quite unconscious of having "thought" on a problem the decision which seems to come like a flash from nowhere is really the culmination of a long process of thinking that has been taking place in the margin of our consciousness.

Let us test this assertion by referring again to

our two typical cases. Did either of the young folks do any thinking about the problems before them and did that thinking have anything to do with the new habits which were learned? We have no hesitation in answering both of these questions in the affirmative. How much thinking preceded action in either case it is impossible for anyone, even themselves, to say. But judging from common human experience the girl probably thought deeply as well as felt keenly after hearing the disparaging remark about herself. She may have thought about some other girl whose appearance had drawn favorable comments. She may have wondered about where she got her hair cut, or how she cared for her hands. She may have remembered that she had seen this girl reading a certain magazine, or that she had heard her comment on a certain cold cream, or had seen her occasionally going into a certain drug store where she probably purchased such toilet articles as she used. The fact that the girl was not conscious that she was thinking about her problem did not make it unimportant. Whatever she thought and however she thought, thinking was an important element in the formation of the habit, for it determined the nature of the new reaction. It decided whether she should accept the suggestions in the magazine or copy the dress of her classmate. Similarly, the boy must at least have recalled that his mother did not keep a strict accounting of what money she handled, and perhaps also that someone else who had taken money had escaped detection. It is important that due recognition be given to this element in the learning process, for upon the amount

of thinking done and the nature of the thinking the character of the new responses largely depends.

Learning Through the Experience of Others

Fortunately, the fact that we must learn through experience does not mean that experience must always consist in actual, first-hand contact. To put the matter in a different way, we might say that while people always learn from experience they do not always learn from their own experiences. Many Americans who have never had any relations with China or even one citizen of China have a very definite knowledge of China and attitude toward the Chinese people. This learning has been accomplished through the reading of books which tell what has been the experience of certain people who have traveled in China or have had other opportunities for becoming acquainted with the Chinese. In such cases the readers of the books supplement their own experience with the experience of the author. Often, indeed, the reader's impression of the Chinese is obtained in a very roundabout way, for much that is in the book may be not the actual experience of the author but of some other author whose books he has read or of some friend who has reported this experience to him. The principle is also illustrated in the case of a boy who learns to respect law through reading a newspaper report which demonstrates the probability that a criminal will be discovered sooner or later, or of the girl who reverses her attitude toward foreigners after hearing the story of Ruth told by her teacher in the church school.

Advantages of the method. This method of learning is of great value. It eliminates many of the possibilities of risk from education. The method of learning from immediate contacts alone would be both expensive and slow. It would be disastrous if every boy and girl had to learn respect for law by breaking a law and submitting to a suitable punishment. Nor would it be possible for everyone to have as broad a range of contacts as would be desirable for the development of a fine personality. Not many people, for instance, can travel in China or India or Japan and become personally acquainted with the people of those countries, but all can read what others, who have traveled abroad, have learned and can thus enrich their own experience.

Examples of its use. The method is in common use. It is in use in the business world. One merchant reads that another has introduced a new line of goods into his merchandise and has thereby increased the patronage of his store and he proceeds to enlarge the volume of his business in the same way. It is in use in the home. One mother learns from another what remedies she has found most efficacious for certain diseases and uses them. It is in use on the recreational field. One tennis player appropriates the little trick which is giving another an advantage over his rival. It is in use in the schools. One pupil reads the story of Napoleon and for another Shakespeare recreates Macbeth and both come to the conclusion that ruthless ambition does not pay. And this is indeed the highest function of the curriculum materials which are used in the

schools—not to cram the minds of the pupils with names and dates, but to make available to them those portions of the accumulated experience of the race which will best illuminate their own problems.

Learning Through Controlled Experience

It is important to notice also that the fact that we must learn through experience does not imply that experience must be left to chance. Much learning does and always will come through experiences which just happen. In the illustrations cited at the beginning of this chapter the experiences which resulted in the development of neatness on the part of one young person and a habit of stealing on the part of another were probably of the haphazard kind. But they need not have been. The remark which occasioned the change in habits of dress might and indeed may have been deliberately designed to effect such a result. If the boy's parents had been definitely trying to control their son's experiences so that desirable learnings would result, they could probably have prevented the development of the unfortunate habit.

Importance of control of experience. Because haphazard experiences, although they teach well in the sense that what is learned is well learned, yield undesirable as well as desirable results, the advantage in attempting to control experience is at once apparent. Here is the opportunity of the school. Indeed, this is all the school can do for its pupils. No one may learn for another, but it is sometimes possible so to enlarge and arrange someone else's experiences that desirable learning may result. The

immediate problem of the teacher, then, is the controlled enrichment of the experience of his pupils.

Needs in different situations. Sometimes the teacher will find that the greatest need is for stimulation of thought. Some of the pupils are not thinking enough about the problems before them. Others are drawing wrong conclusions. Perhaps they do not know how to weigh values, to look at all sides of a problem. Perhaps they do not see the significance of certain important elements in the situation which they are facing. The teacher must encourage such pupils to be thoughtful. He must give them an opportunity to think about the problems before them and about those which are likely to arise. He must be sure that they see all the elements in the various situations and where they are unable to discover all of these for themselves he must point them out to them.

In other cases difficulties are due to lack of information or to incorrect information. In other words, the experience of the pupils is not helping them to find out all that they need to know about certain situations. Boys and girls cannot be expected to respect a nation about which they know very little or perhaps have been misinformed. They cannot appreciate a situation which is unlike anything they have experienced. The teacher has recourse to two different methods in supplying the needed information. Either he may bring the pupils into direct contact with the situation or let them discover it for themselves, or he may pass on the information to them. To state the matter in concrete terms, we might say that if a teacher wants his pupils to know

something about the Japanese, he may either make it possible for them to associate with a group of Japanese or he may tell them about them. If he wants them to know how hard their parents work, he may give them some tasks similar to those in which their parents are engaged or he may explain what is involved in such work and indicate how hard it is to do. In either case by making information available he will be supplementing the rather meager experience of the pupils.

In other cases, again, it is the emotional element in the experience of the pupils which is unsatisfactory. Some boys and girls need an emotional shock to make them feel differently about certain situations. We find some pupils, for instance, who do not hesitate to copy from their fellows at examination time. This habit will not be overcome unless they are made to feel differently about copying. In others again the feeling of gratitude or reverence has not been kindled.

Methods of introducing control. Again, in meeting his problem the teacher has recourse to two different methods. Either he may make his plans so that the next time these pupils are guilty of deceit or ingratitude or irreverence they will be made to feel ashamed or sorry. In the case of the pupil who copies he may see to it that he is caught and severely punished. In the case of the one who shows his lack of appreciation of his parents or of the one who is irreverent he may see to it that his conduct incurs the disapproval of his fellow pupils and thus is actually attended with dissatisfaction.

Often, however, such a plan will be difficult or

even impossible to carry out. If so, the teacher may have recourse to the method of supplementing the experience of his pupils by helping them to discover how others have felt in such situations. In other words, he may tell them a story which will make them ashamed of their past conduct, or which will show them how happy they would feel if they reacted differently and thus create the more desirable emotional attitude.

Problems of control. At this point it will be pertinent to indicate something of the difficulties which the teacher should guard against in attempting to control experience. Not all attempts to make desirable conduct satisfying and undesirable conduct unsatisfactory secure the desired results in the building up of habits. In some instances this is due to the fact that the satisfaction associated with the conduct was not inherent in it. A case in point is that of a parent who attempted to build up a habit of church attendance by paying his son every Sunday that he went to church. The plan worked only so long as the payments were kept up. As soon as they were discontinued interest in churchgoing waned. This was because there never had been any satisfaction inherent in attending church. Such satisfaction will probably not be developed unless the services are definitely planned with a view to meeting the real needs of young people. The method of paying for church attendance might be resorted to for a few times if some such means were necessary, but as must be clearly evident only as a supplement to the other method.

This explains why such methods of recruiting

members for the church school as the organization of ball teams and the promotion of contests and membership drives often fail to produce permanent results in the way of increased attendance. In such cases the habit has been built upon the satisfaction of outnumbering another class and of beating another team and not on the benefits derived from attendance upon the school. It is likely to break down, therefore, when the excitement of the contest or of the athletic season is over.

Another reason why plans fail is because the rewards for good conduct or the punishments for bad conduct appeal less to the individual than do other satisfactions associated with the situation. A boy will go fishing even though he knows he will be punished for doing so. In this case fear of punishment is less potent as a deterrent than anticipation of pleasure is as an incentive. Even fear of sickness with its consequences of being confined to the house and having to take medicine, will sometimes not deter boys and girls from pleasures which result in wet feet and colds. In both these cases the immediacy of the fun is a factor. A remote consequence will not easily outweigh one which follows soon.

Further, a story must make a very vivid appeal if it is to outweigh an actual pleasure. The teacher who attempts to use the story of David and Saul to overcome a pupil's habit of unfairness toward his rival is working against a very powerful motive. When the pupil meets his rival on the playground the emotion he feels may be much stronger than that which he experienced when he heard the story. This

is not to say that stories are ineffectual, but simply to point out the importance of selecting those stories which have sufficiently strong emotional appeals to accomplish the desired results.

Life In and Out of School

A significant contrast. Necessarily the experiences of the schoolroom must differ somewhat from out-of-school experiences. It is because of this that schools exist. We teach in order that we may control experience to the end that boys and girls will develop at a different rate and in a different way than they would if they were not in school. Because actual contacts with situations, although always an effective way of learning, are sometimes very expensive, the program of the school usually includes less of these and substitutes for them more information about the experience of others than is ordinarily provided by the life out of school. Likewise, in the school there is more talking and thinking about various kinds of experience and consequently less time for actually doing things than there is in the same number of hours out of school.

Artificiality in education. Unfortunately, however, in times past the difference between life in school and life out of school has been greatly exaggerated. Instead of being somewhat different they have been altogether different. Education has been allowed to become a very artificial thing. Boys and girls have come to regard lessons as something quite remote from life. Some of them even failed to recognize that the characters about whom they

studied were human like themselves and really lived at one time upon this earth.

Once this attitude is developed education loses seriously in value. There is no justification for teaching unless it illumines life. For this reason educators in the church school as well as in the day school are emphasizing the dangers of artificiality in education and are trying to make the pupils appreciate the value of the experiences of the classroom.

Experiences of real value. Of course, this effort will be futile if those experiences are not actually as valuable as they ought to be. No matter what type of activity we introduce into the classroom or how interesting we try to make the work, we do not justify the existence of the church school unless we are supplying a real need in the lives of the pupils.

For Further Study

1. Below are three Old Testament stories often used as teaching material for Intermediate pupils. Explain explicitly the process by which you would expect each of these to contribute to the development of desirable characteristics.
   (*a*) Nehemiah rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem.
   (*b*) Jacob buys his brother's birthright.
   (*c*) Ruth leaves her country and friends in order that she may accompany her mother-in-law into a strange country.
2. Show how the adage "Experience is the best teacher" sometimes leads to wrong conclusions.
3. A teacher who desired to break his pupils of the habit of coming late to class on Sunday morning

asked some of his fellow teachers to recommend a plan. The following five suggestions were given to him. If he asked your opinion on the relative merits of these suggestions, what would you tell him?

(*a*) Arrange with the ushers that late comers be not permitted to join their classmates on their arrival on Sunday morning, but be compelled to occupy seats near the entrance to the department room until the worship service is dismissed.

(*b*) Co-operate with the other teachers in the school in procuring a stereopticon lantern which will be used to show good pictures each Sunday morning for fifteen minutes preceding the beginning of the regular work of the school.

(*c*) Open the classroom fifteen minutes in advance of the time for beginning work and encourage pupils to come early and work at their notebooks or enjoy the good papers and magazines placed there by a special pulpit committee elected by the class.

(*d*) Tell the class a story of a pupil who was habitually late for the sessions of the church school, and whose dilatory habits created such a bad impression upon the father of one of the boy's classmates, when his attention was drawn to the matter, that it caused him to refuse to recommend the boy for membership in a summer camping party of which he was a sponsor.

(*e*) Talk frankly to the pupils who have been tardy, pointing out the annoyance which the habit has been causing others, as well as its effect upon their own characters.

4. In a certain Intermediate Department a big membership contest was held and the membership

list practically doubled. Six months later, however, the teachers found that the attendance was as low as it had been before the contest was held. When one of the teachers suggested that there must be something seriously wrong with a school which had such an irregular attendance record he received this reply: "There is nothing the matter. It is time for another contest." How would you have answered him?

5. What would you say to a parent who protested against your method of teaching with the words, "I wish he would stop telling my boy stories and teach him something."

References for Supplementary Reading

Method in Teaching Religion, Betts and Hawthorne, Chapters III-VI.

Learning and Teaching, Sheridan and White, Chapter VI.

Psychology of the Junior High School Pupil, Pechstein and McGregor, Chapters IV, V, VI.

The Psychology of Childhood, Norsworthy and Whitley.

How to Teach, Strayer and Norsworthy, Chapter VI.

CHAPTER VII

FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS OF TEACHING PROCEDURE

Euclid's declaration that "there is no royal road to learning," though so familiar to many as to seem commonplace, will bear repetition with each new group of teachers in training. Learning involves hard work on the part of the learner as well as the teacher. To be effective, teaching must enlist the co-operation of the pupils. The indifferent boy or girl, the one who pays only half-hearted attention to the work, who engages listlessly in the activities of the classroom, who says, "Sunday-school lessons are all right, but there never yet has been a Sunday when I couldn't have found something more interesting to do if I hadn't had to go to Sunday school," receives comparatively little benefit from the lessons. He may make some progress in learning, but he will not make as much nor will he learn as easily as if he were really interested in the work.

The problem of attention. Probably every teacher has at one time or another struggled with the problem of the indifferent pupil. Many teachers find themselves continually facing it. There seem always to be some pupils whose attention wanders from the work and who frequently need to be called back to the problems before the class.

One of the earliest methods used to keep pupils

The Method of Coercion

busy in the classroom was that of coercion. Assignments of work were made, and boys and girls were given to understand that if these were not well and quickly done severe penalties would be meted out. In other words, the pupils worked because they had to.

Effectiveness of coercion questioned. There are those who will contend that the method was effective. Certainly, learning took place in the day when a bundle of switches was the symbol of education. But it is an open question whether the best pupils did not learn in spite of the method rather than because of it. Undoubtedly, there were many boys and girls then as there are now who studied because they enjoyed it and who would have applied themselves industriously even if there had been no threat of punishment.

Another reason for questioning the value of the method is because we know that in some cases the fear of severe penalties actually interferes with learning. We often hear some such statement as "In school I never liked history. Somehow I managed to make a passing grade. I had to. But my teacher was very severe and I dreaded to work." In such a case the method has really failed although it has seemed to succeed. For the reason for teaching a subject is not to get the pupils to acquire just enough information about it to enable them to pass an examination, but to get them to see values in it and use it through life. The study of history, for instance, will develop a point of view which will

change all later thinking. And one who dislikes history will hardly appreciate its lessons or apply them when he has an important decision to make. Thus the method fails because it does not strike at the roots of the problem. It succeeds in making the pupils work, but not in making them want to work.

The method has also been criticized on the ground that it does not develop satisfactory habits of work. It teaches the pupils to depend on someone else to keep them at their tasks. Once pupils become accustomed to a taskmaster they find it difficult to get along without one. That is why boys and girls who have spent three or four years in a school where threat of punishment has been made one of the main incentives for work have difficulty in adjusting to any situation in which they are put upon their own responsibility.

But these criticisms do not altogether invalidate the method. An element of coercion seems to run all through life. Human beings seem to need some kind of pressure to keep them at their tasks. Many adults admit that much of their success in life is due to the fact that they felt they had to work. The best incentives are joy in the work and an appreciation of its value. But the fact that physical comfort and well-being depend on one's industry is often a powerful additional element.

Coercion in the church school. Now, let us consider the problem as it applies to the work of the Intermediate Department. Should coercion be used with Intermediate pupils in the church school and to what extent? At the present time it is not used in the church school as much as it is in the junior

high school. Attendance at the junior high is compulsory, and this alone permits these schools to require certain standards of work. It is not possible for the church school to require attendance and it would probably not seem desirable to do so if it were possible. The church is now pretty thoroughly committed to the policy that religion should be a matter of choice and not of compulsion. And yet there are many who feel that Intermediate pupils are not yet ready for freedom of choice in regard to whether they shall or shall not go to the church school. They think that parents would be quite justified in requiring their children to attend the sessions of the church school regularly and to be punctual.

In the matter of discipline also the church school is generally less exacting than the junior high school. This seems to be a direct result of the policy in the matter of attendance. Since the pupils are not required to go to the church school, teachers feel that they must be very careful not to offend them in any way. Undoubtedly, there are advantages as well as disadvantages in this situation. The fundamental attitude of the pupil will be the better for being built upon something else than fear. And yet there are many schools where the work would be greatly improved if the regulations were more rigid. Intermediate pupils who cannot or will not control themselves should not be permitted to disturb others. Nor should they be allowed to do careless work or to waste their time. This does not mean that the element of coercion will predominate. In a well-conducted school there will be little need for enforcing regulations. But there is a real value

in having the pupils understand that infringements of the rights of other pupils or of the officers of the school will not be tolerated.

Pupil self-government. The best schools go a step further and enlist the aid of the pupils in making and enforcing regulations. The amount of progress which can be made in this direction will depend largely upon the earlier preparation of the pupils. Those who in their homes and weekday classes are constantly held in check and given little opportunity for the development of self-reliance cannot safely be given the privilege of entire self-government. Yet such pupils need training in self-government much more than do those from homes and schools where there is less coercion.

Group control of regulations has the further advantage that it appeals to the powerful motive of winning group approval. Early adolescents adjust more readily to the standards of their fellows than to those of their teachers. When one of the members of the class says bluntly, "Oh, cut that out, fellows, we want to hear this," he is administering a more effective rebuke than a severe penalty imposed by the teacher.

The Giving of Rewards

The method of giving rewards for good work has also been long in use in educational circles.

Values of rewards. Like the method of meting out punishments for work which is unsatisfactory, the giving of rewards does not always touch the real source of difficulty. It provides an incentive to keep busy, but does not always create the desire to

do the piece of work upon which the class is engaged. It has this advantage over the method of using coercion that such attitudes as are created are likely to be favorable. If the rewards offered are pleasing, and as a usual thing they are, they tend to establish friendly relations between pupil and teacher and at least make the lesson hour a happy one. Some few teachers by encouraging their pupils in this way have been able to transform an attitude of indifference for a subject of study into tolerance for it and even into interest.

Disadvantages of rewards. On the other hand, the same charge may be brought against this method as was brought against the method of coercion: namely, that it tends to develop unsatisfactory work habits. Pupils who work because of the reward may cease to work when the promise of the reward has been withdrawn.

In extreme cases the giving of the reward actually takes the attention of the pupils off the work. A case in point is that of a class of third-year Intermediate girls whose teacher as a reward for good conduct during the lesson period brought her lesson to a close five or ten minutes early each Sunday and read aloud a chapter from a story. While the method solved some problems of disorder it did not secure the best attention to the topics of study. As time went on the minds of the girls became more and more absorbed in anticipation of the story. They answered the teacher's questions in a mechanical sort of way. Try as the teacher would to make them so, the class discussions were never very successful.

Rewards in the church school. But, again, we

are not ready to advocate dispensing altogether with the giving of rewards. Even the most interested and conscientious students find that the opportunity to make a good grade helps them to do better work. Graduation diplomas really keep many boys and girls in school a year or two longer than they would remain if there were no such goal to work for.

In using the method in the Intermediate Department of the church school due recognition must be given to the fact that some types of reward are less open to criticism than others. The giving of grades has the disadvantage that it may lead to undesirable rivalry between individual pupils. While this may not interfere with the learning of the lesson before the class it strikes at the roots of the whole enterprise. As a general rule, it may be said that those rewards are more satisfactory which seem to grow naturally out of the work itself. That is to say, to give a grade is better than to give a treat of candy, because the grade is actually a measure of work done, and to award class honors for good conduct is preferable to the giving of a prize, because the good conduct has been evidence that responsibilities can be borne. Further, the less tangible rewards are of greater value than are material rewards. Character will remain upon a low plane indeed if boys and girls are not given opportunity to respond to such incentives as the desire of approval of parents and teachers and of their own best selves.

Finding a Point of Contact

In recent years the effort to solve the problem of creating a better attitude on the part of the pupils

toward the work has led to an emphasis on the importance of enlisting the interest of the pupil at the very beginning of the lesson period. The phrase "point of contact" was coined to express this idea in a striking way to the teacher. The plan was to begin the lesson with something that would prove interesting to the pupils and would at the same time constitute a good introduction for the main part of the lesson, the idea being that once having succeeded in arousing the interest of the pupils the teacher could hold it through the entire period.

Value of a point of contact. At its best the method had much to commend it. It helped teachers in religious education to see the importance of beginning their lessons with concrete situations rather than with abstract principles, with present-day problems rather than with those which seem very remote. In other words, it tended to tie lessons up to life. The football game or the quarrel which formed the point of contact with the lesson proper was in itself excellent teaching material.

Weakness of the method. At its worst the method was confusing and of little value. Teachers did not always succeed in holding the interest of their pupils when they made the swift transition from their point of contact to the lesson proper. The difficulty was that the point of contact was too often merely a device for commanding attention and was irrelevant to the main point of the lesson. The result was that it made the real problem seem less interesting and took the attention of the pupils away from it instead of leading up to it. What was needed was something more than a *point* of contact.

The contact between pupil interest and need and the work of the classroom brings the best results only when maintained throughout the entire lesson.

The Project Principle

More recently educators have found what many of them feel to be a better method of developing an interest on the part of the pupils for the work of the classroom than any previously used. This is the method of making the educational enterprise into a real pupil project.

Project defined. The word "project" has been used by so many different people and in so many different ways that it is difficult to define it in terms generally acceptable. And yet it is easy enough to see when the activities of boys and girls are projects and when they are not. Here is a boy who goes to the school library to get from the scientific magazines some material bearing on a problem which his science teacher has set him, and here is another who has earned some money which he desires to invest in materials for building a radio, and he comes to find out, if he can, what materials he will need and how much they will cost. One does not have to be an educational expert to risk an opinion as to which one of these two is working on a real project and which one is not.

It is evident that the significant thing about a project is not the type of activity, for the activities of both of these boys were similar, but the attitude of the pupils toward the activity. In the case of the boy who was building the radio it is reasonable to assume that his study of the magazines was under-

taken willingly and gladly because he realized that it would enable him to acquire a desired possession. The other boy we suppose to have had the traditional schoolboy attitude to an assigned task. His motives were to avoid punishment, to make a grade, perhaps even to get a certificate which he desired very much because it would open to him opportunities which he valued. But in the real end toward which his work contributed, the mastery of certain scientific principles, he was not particularly interested. If he had been, he too would have been working on a project.

What is a project for one pupil, then, may not be a project for another. The only way of telling whether pupils are working on a real project is by the way they react to it. An assignment in physics may become a project for some pupils. Others, again, will not respond enthusiastically to an opportunity to build a radio. They will work upon it if the teacher insists but there is no impelling interest in the idea of building a radio which keeps them enthusiastically at work upon all of the details of the enterprise.

Types of projects. As has been suggested above, there are different kinds of projects. The first projects used in connection with school work have been called by some "activity projects." They were introduced as organizing centers for work in agriculture. Instead of sitting in a classroom and learning from books how to grow corn the students were taken into the out-of-doors and given an opportunity actually to raise a crop of corn. As various difficulties presented themselves help was given and textbooks

were consulted. Later it was seen that the principle could be applied in other lines of work. Planning refreshments for a parent-teacher meeting formed an excellent project for teaching some lessons in home economics. Many other practical enterprises were introduced into the classroom from the working out of which it was felt that the pupils could learn more easily and more effectively than from the study of books alone.

Projects in religious education. This type of project is well adapted for the accomplishment of some of the purposes of the teacher in religious education. Actual participation in acts of Christian service is one of the best ways of learning to be a Christian. Therefore a program for Intermediate boys and girls may well include a wide range of activity projects. The pupils will benefit greatly from such enterprises as packing baskets and boxes for those in need, caring for little children when their mothers are engaged in various women's activities of the church, singing or reading to those who are confined to their homes, participating in the great festivals of the church, taking charge of the opening services of the department, and rendering various services for the minister or other officials of the church. In order that these projects may have a maximum of value they should be recognized not as merely incidental but as a real part of the educational program and all the time and effort that seems necessary to make them worth while should be devoted to them.

While the method as it was first worked out included only activity projects which could not be

widely used in all school subjects, it was soon discovered that the principle of organizing the work around a real pupil interest could be applied rather extensively. Boys and girls may become quite as enthusiastic over solving a problem as they do about preparing a Thanksgiving dinner for a needy family. So we have what many educators call problem-projects and what some insist on differentiating from the other kind of projects by characterizing them simply as problems. Again, by whatever name they are called, they vitalize education only when the pupils recognize them as really satisfying enterprises. The teacher may set problem after problem and still have to urge his pupils on, while if the problems really appeal the need for urging is practically eliminated.

Problem-projects can be used to advantage by the religious educator. Much of the work in religion has to do with the development of adequate conceptions. Boys and girls will enjoy and will benefit from an opportunity to discover what others have thought about the questions which now greatly perplex them. The questions, "Where did the Bible come from?" "Why do Christians revere many of the same heroes as the Jewish people of to-day honor?" "Why do we have so many different kinds of churches?" may be made the organizing centers for real project courses.

It appears, then, as if the program of the Intermediate Department might very properly consist in an alternation of projects of the two types. Perhaps we might begin with an activity project which would provide for actual experience in the Christian

life. Out of this experience might grow questions which would lead to the undertaking of certain study projects. These in turn would call for further activity projects in which the principles deduced from the study might be tested and applied.

Another basis of classification. It is important to notice that projects may also be classified according to whether they contribute directly or indirectly to the teacher's purpose. The following incident illustrates what the latter type of project is like: A teacher of Intermediate girls who was planning to teach a course of lessons on the life of Christ discovered that her pupils were tired of the conventional Sunday-school lessons and were eager for something new. In view of these circumstances she hesitated to begin the course and yet she was unwilling to abandon it as she felt the girls needed it. A request from one of the pupils that the class prepare a pageant suggested a way out of the difficulty. Here was an opportunity to work out her own plan of having the girls study about the life of Christ and at the same time gratify their desire for a change in the type of work. So she granted the request, and tactfully suggested that if the girls wished to be quite original they might write the pageant as well as present it, pointing out how effective a play could be if based on certain scenes from the life of Jesus. The idea appealed, and for the entire fall quarter the girls applied themselves industriously to the preparation of the play and incidentally to the study of the materials which the teacher wished to bring to their attention.

An example of a case where the pupils' purpose

is identical with the teacher's is that of a class that voluntarily undertook a six-months study of the Old Testament with the definite purpose of getting a clear outline of the outstanding events of early Hebrew history. Those to whom this seems a rather academic desire for early adolescents will be interested to learn that it was inspired by a biblical knowledge test which the teacher gave at the beginning of the term. Two motives seem to have been aroused by the test: a desire to improve upon the very low grades made and a curiosity concerning the many unfamiliar names included in the test. These supplied an incentive for the lesson study and transformed what might otherwise have been a rather uninteresting course of study into a real project.

Evaluation of project method. It is impossible to evaluate the project method without taking into account this fundamental difference in type. It can easily be seen that in the project which contributes only indirectly to educational ends there is considerable waste of time and effort. While the class which prepared the Christmas play spent a good deal of time on the study of the life of Christ, they had also to pay much attention to relatively unimportant details, to the making of scenery, and to producing a more finished production than would have been necessary in the case of a classroom dramatization having equal educational value.

In the second place, in this type of project results are not always entirely satisfactory. Not all of the gospel narratives may be presented in a single play, and in the preparation of it some incidents will be passed over lightly which the teacher would prefer

to have the pupils study carefully. Because the play, and not the study of materials, is the important thing in the mind of the pupils, the work must be organized around the play and lesson study must suffer accordingly.

Many of these difficulties are eliminated in the project which contributes directly to educational ends. Here the teacher's purpose is central. Pupils who undertake the project of making an outline of Hebrew history are not taken away from some of the important points by the exigencies of preparing a drama. All of their time and effort is directed toward what is obviously the important element in their work.

The chief difficulty with this kind of project is in getting it initiated. Debates, pageants, contests, excursions usually make a much greater appeal than the more prosaic direct study projects. And yet one wonders whether the educational enterprise will really be successful until it becomes of itself a pupil project. Teachers have little difficulty with mature students who elect work because they are aware of its value to them. It is only when the pupils do not feel that the work is worth while that teachers have to be continually providing devices to hold their attention. More effort on planning the lessons to meet actual pupil needs and on pointing out the significance of the work to the pupils is really what is needed to vitalize teaching.

Objections to the project method. To the project method in general the objection has been made that its exclusive use makes for an unbalanced program. It is conceivable that there will often be de-

sirable projects in which it is difficult to interest the pupils. In this case the question must be faced as to whether it would be best to hold to the project method even though it meant leaving some good topics of study untouched, or whether the teacher should sacrifice the principle of making the work a real pupil project and impose his plans upon the class. No rule, of course, fits all cases. A sacrifice of something valuable is entailed whichever course is followed. The question must be decided on the basis of which sacrifice is the least serious, and that varies in individual cases. Usually a tactful teacher can guide the work without alienating his pupils, and if this is possible, it is probably best to be guided by pupil needs and not simply by pupil desires. On the other hand, in the case of a difficult class it is sometimes wise to use projects in which they are interested, postponing other phases of the work until greater confidence in the teacher is developed or until an opportunity presents itself for arousing their enthusiasm for the topic of study which the teacher regards as desirable.

How to work out a project. In working out any project, whether in school or out of it, the first step consists in deciding what is to be done. Next comes the making of plans as to how the work is to be carried on. This is followed by the actual doing of the work. And if the piece of work is to have educational value, there is still a fourth step to be taken at the conclusion of the enterprise. This consists in reviewing what has been done and evaluating it. These steps are followed by most educators who advocate the use of the project method. The terms

"purposing," "planning," "executing," and "judging," have been applied to them.

It would probably be possible in the case of each of these steps to advance a substantial argument in support of the position that it constitutes the critical point in the whole process. Certainly, it is not difficult to demonstrate the importance of the first step. It is here that the attitude is set which carries through the whole undertaking. Upon the method by which the idea is presented depends the success of the enterprise. If the idea does not commend itself, if the pupils do not themselves really "purpose" to undertake the work, there will be no project.

Getting the project started. The question often arises, "Is it possible for a teacher to initiate a project, or must the idea come from the pupils?" Probably every teacher has had an experience which prompts him to reply without hesitation that it is possible for the teacher to take the initiative. Again and again pupils will come to their teachers all enthusiaasm for a plan which they think they have worked out all by themselves, but which the teacher recognizes as a development of one of his own suggestions to them. Even where they do recognize that the idea originated with their teacher they are none the less enthusiastic about it. If the idea appeals, they do not care where it came from, for the project is theirs.

This is not to say that projects may not be initiated by the pupils. All projects that are worth while begin with pupil needs, and some of them are brought before the group by some of the boys or

girls. "Let's do something with part of this money what will help someone else and not spend all of it on ourselves," said a twelve-year-old girl when the class treasurer read her report of the proceeds of a social which had as its purpose the raising of money to buy some cretonne to dress up their room. Out of this suggestion grew the project of finding out something about the different home-mission schools for girls supported by the denomination, and out of this project grew others. Having become acquainted with the needs of some girls of their own age living in the mountain districts of the Southern States, these young people wanted to help them still more. So materials were secured and gifts made, books and papers collected and sent.

The fact that many projects are initiated by the pupils does not relieve the teacher of the necessity of planning for this first step in the working out of a project. Not all of the chance remarks of the pupils will lead to projects. Only as the teacher has carefully studied his problems will he be in a position to determine which leads to follow. The teacher who saw possibilities in the suggestion that some of the class money be shared with others knew that her pupils needed an experience in giving. She had been looking for just such an opportunity and was, therefore, ready for it when it came.

But what is the teacher to do whose pupils fail to give him the desired opportunity? All he needs to do is simply to remember that one of the chief purposes of education is to eliminate the risks of chance. If the questions do not come spontaneously, he must stimulate them.

Planning the project. In regard to the second step in the working out of a project—planning—the principle must be laid down that plans must at least be shared by the pupils. One of the most serious mistakes made in dealing with Intermediate boys and girls is that too often their thinking has been done for them. They crave the opportunity to use their own initiative. And, further, they need this opportunity. They learn best when thrown upon their own resources. Therefore, as far as possible, they must be made responsible for the planning. As a member of the class group the teacher will make a contribution to the plans. As an older and more experienced member he may be looked to by the pupils for helpful advice, but the group as a whole will make the plans.

In order that the group be thoroughly democratic some teachers follow the practice of giving the pupils the privilege of electing a chairman who will be in charge of the details involved in carrying out the project. This provides excellent general training. The method must be used with caution. Perhaps it is best not to introduce it too soon. After a class has worked out several projects and the members have become thoroughly familiar with the procedure involved, the more alert pupils will probably be in a position to act as leaders. In any case the teacher must feel free to criticize and to encourage criticisms from the other members.

Plans must be made in detail. In such a project as the study of the home-mission work for early adolescent girls the problem will probably have to be broken up into smaller and more definite ques-

tions. The pupils must decide just what it is they desire to find out. Perhaps some such questions as these will be formulated: "How many institutions are there which care for girls of this age? What kind of institutions are they? What are they trying to do for the girls? Where are they located? How many girls does each school reach? What kind of girls are they? What are their homes like? What particular needs have they which are not being adequately met?"

Next, methods of work must be determined upon. How are these questions to be answered? In the case of the home-mission project suggested above undoubtedly the chief source of information will be printed materials, although it will also be desirable to consult the officers of the Home Missionary Society, and perhaps to interview certain missionaries spending furloughs in the vicinity. Some of these persons might be invited to meet with the class to give addresses or to answer questions.

Having decided upon the methods to be used, definite parts of the work should be assigned to individual members. Different pupils should be made responsible for securing literature, for consulting the speakers, for making reports on the various topics. In order that mistakes may not be made a careful docket should be prepared indicating just what is to be done and to whom the different tasks have been assigned. If a blackboard is used for the making of this outline, the individual pupils will be in a better position to pass on it, and each one will also be able to determine with exactness just what is expected of him.

Executing the project. Where the plans have been carefully made the actual execution of the work will be greatly facilitated. In the case of the project under discussion all that is required in addition to individual work outside of class is the making of reports and the summation of the results by the group.

Ideally, the interest in the enterprise should insure good work from all. But lapses do occur. Someone forgets to do his task, or does a slipshod piece of work, and all suffer. To prevent this the group sometimes announces that penalties will be imposed on the offending members. In other cases a committee is appointed with responsibility for seeing that each piece of work is done well and on time.

Judging the project. Because the project now seems complete, the teacher may have to use tact in persuading the pupils of the necessity for evaluating what they have done. After a few experiences the importance of this step will be recognized and it will be regarded as an essential part of the work. In order that the criticisms may contribute to the doing of better work in the future, provision should be made for recording them so that they may easily be referred to later.

The completed project has an educational value. Boys and girls can now look back on what has been done, noting its good points as guides for future activities and profiting also by the mistakes. For this reason educators insist on the fourth step, judging, as being indispensable in the working out of a project.

Other Modern Tendencies in Education

While the method of teaching by projects has not been universally adopted, and indeed has come in for a good deal of criticism in some quarters, it seems to have left an important impress upon the educational procedure of the day. Or perhaps it would be fairer to say that the project method itself constitutes one phase of a widespread emphasis upon the need for a new kind of motivation in education. However we explain it, we must admit that even in schools which have not adopted the project method there is evidence of a deliberate attempt to break from the older methods of procedure.

Methods of motivation. Prominent among the methods used to make the work more interesting is that of organizing classroom procedure around play interests. This method seeks to include the learning of rather uninteresting facts in games and thus to supply a motive which will hold the attention of boys and girls to a difficult and unpleasant task.

The realization of the importance of making classroom work seem meaningful and worth while has also led to the effort to provide the pupils with first hand contacts with many of the things studied. This is why excursions, demonstrations, and other like methods are in use in a large number of classrooms. Boys and girls will be more interested in studying about people whom they know and places which they have seen than in those with which they have had no first-hand experience.

Even more far-reaching in its results is the recognition given to the place of group consciousness in

the motivation of the educational enterprise. As was indicated earlier, punishment by the group or rewards given by the group or with the approval of the group are more valuable as deterrents or incentives than the same punishments or rewards coming from the teacher. But teachers need not stop here. The mere fact that the enterprise upon which all are at work is a group enterprise provides a strong motive to do good work. A boy who cares very little for the approval of his teacher will be ashamed to have his classmates see him fall down on a piece of work of which they approve. For this reason many teachers are devoting much effort in their work with their classes to the building up of a feeling of group solidarity and to the introduction of democratic procedure in the classroom.

It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that the problem of securing the whole-hearted co-operation of the pupils can be solved simply by adopting some particular method. The problem is not one of method. In the hands of one who does not appreciate what the real issues are any method may fail to bring good results. On the other hand, many teachers solved the problem long before the newer methods were developed. Perhaps they stumbled upon them without realizing what important discoveries they were making. But one feels that the secret of their success was not in their method, but in something that lay back of their method, their appreciation of the importance not of making the pupils work, but of making them want to work. Through the years the really successful teacher has been the one who kept constantly before himself

this question, "How am I going to make to-day's work meaningful and worth while for my pupils?"

For Further Study

1. What would you say to a teacher who remarked, "I do not believe in all these newfangled ideas of teaching. Teaching is a very simple thing. All you have to do is put the lesson before the pupils and make them learn it"?

2. Some people believe that it is more difficult for teachers in the church school to maintain discipline than it is for teachers in secular schools. Do you agree with this position. Give reasons for your answer.

3. How would you rate your own church school in the matter of discipline? Suggest methods for improving it.

4. What advantages and what disadvantages can you see in making certain important facts about the Bible into games and having the pupils play them?

5. Comment on the plan of organizing a quarter's work around the project of preparing and telling a group of Bible stories to younger pupils in the church school.

6. Show how the project of taking charge of the morning worship in the school for several Sundays could result in the development of a new attitude toward the different items usually included in a worship service.

7. Suggest two activity projects and two study projects in which you think a class of Intermediate pupils would be interested.

8. Suggest a number of different ways of dealing

with inattention in a classroom. Evaluate each one.

9. Show how all or a part of the course which you are now using or propose soon to use with your class of Intermediates can be made into a real pupil project. Outline your plan of procedure as teacher, indicating just what you would do and what you would expect your pupils to do at each step of the working out of the project. If you are not now teaching, refer to the course which you would probably use if you were to take a class.

References for Supplementary Reading

The Project Principle in the Education, Shaver, Part I, Chapters 1-7, 10-12. Part II, Section 4.

Intermediate Method in the Church School, McKibben, pp. 136-145.

Learning and Teaching, Sheridan and White, Chapters III, XIII, XVIII.

Method in Teaching Religion, Betts and Hawthorne, Chapters VIII, XII.

How to Teach, Strayer and Norsworthy, Chapters III, VII.

The Psychology of the Junior High School Pupil, Chapters VIII-XI, XIV.

Foundations of Method, Kilpatrick.

CHAPTER VIII

SPECIAL METHOD WITH INTERMEDIATES

THERE are still teachers who do not realize that teaching method with Intermediates must be somewhat different from that used with younger and with older pupils. In this fact we have the explanation of a considerable part of the trouble sometimes experienced by teachers of early adolescents. Anyone who undertakes to use with pupils of this age the methods of the Primary and Junior Departments, or on the other hand, treats early adolescent boys and girls as if they were adults, is almost certain to encounter difficulties. The Intermediate is no longer a child and he resents being treated like one. Nor is he ready for the type of work which may be expected of adults. Teaching methods must be adapted if they are to capture the interests of Intermediate boys and girls.

Having said this, we should make haste to point out that it is quite possible to overemphasize the point. In its fundamental characteristics the process of education is the same whatever the age of the learner. To assume that there must be used with Intermediates methods entirely different from those used with any other group would create more difficulties than would result from a failure to recognize that there was any difference at all. What is needed is a *modification* of the methods used else-

where and not a totally different method. Before deciding which methods he will use, therefore, the teacher must examine the typical teaching procedures in the light of what is known regarding early adolescence.

The Lecture Method

Telling as a teaching method. A method of teaching in common use in the church school is that in which the main feature consists of a talk by the teacher. Although as a usual thing these talks are quite informal and have none of the dignity of a formal lecture, the method may be characterized as "the lecture method." Lessons of this kind have this in common with the lecture, that such facts as bear upon the problem before the class are presented to the pupils by the teacher, and that the thinking of the pupils is directed step by step toward the conclusion which the teacher desires them to formulate. In other words, teaching is here synonymous with telling.

When we ask whether the method is adapted for use with Intermediate boys and girls, some teachers are sure to reply emphatically that it will not work at all with pupils of this age. They will admit that adults sometimes seem to like the method, that classes of younger children often endure it, but they will insist that Intermediate pupils are sure to rebel if anyone attempts to teach them in this way.

This is what our knowledge of early adolescents would lead us to expect. An Intermediate pupil cannot help growing impatient when he is required to sit still and listen to someone else talk. He

wants to be doing something and he does not hesitate to show that he is dissatisfied when he is not given an opportunity for activity. He cannot help becoming resentful if someone else attempts to do his thinking for him. He is able now to think things out for himself and he intends to be allowed to do so. This explains why teachers are so often unsuccessful when they attempt to use the method with Intermediate boys and girls.

But when we have said this we have told only a part of the story. The fact remains that there have been occasions when the lecture method proved to be highly satisfactory. One teacher reports that his class of first-year Intermediate boys said that a talk which their minister gave them on the fall of Jericho was the most interesting lesson they had ever had. A teacher of Intermediate girls claims that a lesson in which she told her class what a writer in the *Atlantic Monthly* reported regarding modern explorations in Palestine was one of the most satisfactory in a whole season's teaching.

In both of these cases success in the use of the method was due to the fact that the material presented was new to the pupils and also that it was, at the same time, recognized by them as interesting and worth while. The minister in his talk pointed out certain facts which the boys had not known in regard to the fall of Jericho and the relation of this event to the conquest of Canaan. He left the boys "feeling glad," as one boy expressed it, "to have discovered at last why this Jericho story is so important." Similarly, the material from the article threw a flood of light upon Bible times and upon

modern methods of research, material to which the pupils would probably not have had access if their teacher had not presented it to them, for the article referred to, like other printed matter dealing with the topic, is difficult reading for early teen-age boys and girls.

When to use the lecture method. Since the method is so often unattractive to boys and girls, it may be wise to adopt the principle that it will be used only under conditions similar to those described above. There will probably always be some facts which boys and girls need to know and to which they cannot have access unless their teacher brings them to their attention. There will probably always be some problems which boys and girls cannot solve for themselves. There will always be some material which they will need to have interpreted for them. This is true of certain selections from the prophets and the epistles which Intermediate pupils understand much better when someone tells them about them than when they read them for themselves. Under such circumstances the lecture method may and probably should be used. But manifestly it will be used only occasionally with Intermediate pupils, never as the sole or even the chief method of teaching.

How to use the lecture method. Even where the lecture method seems the best way of accomplishing what needs to be done, it is not always used successfully. The teacher fails who attempts to talk to early adolescent boys and girls as he would to their fathers and mothers. The method will be unsuccessful if it is not adapted to the pupils.

It should not be necessary to point out to those who have had even a little experience with Intermediate pupils that an abstract, formal sort of a lesson will not appeal to them. Yet many lessons are weak just at this point. The teacher talks of general principles, and the pupils who think in terms of concrete situations find the lesson very tiresome. Boys and girls are not interested in honesty and truthfulness and fortitude, as such, so much as in what to do in school, at home, on the playground. When you lecture use plenty of concrete material, leaving abstract generalizations chiefly to teachers of older classes.

Another reason why early adolescent boys and girls grow restless when the lecture method is used is that there is often so little to hold their attention. When the teacher tells a story they have something to think about. Their curiosity is aroused. They want to hear what is coming next. But when the lecture method is used the teacher often fails to arouse their curiosity. This is not a fault in the method but in the teacher who misuses it. Occasionally we find a teacher who succeeds in arousing the curiosity of his pupils by the lecture method. From the very beginning of the lesson they are interested in what he has to say. This is not difficult of accomplishment if the teacher only takes the trouble to plan for it. The introduction of a problem at the beginning, the use of a few questions as the lesson progresses, will give the pupils a reason for paying attention.

Other teachers fail in the use of the method because their topic is too broad. They plan to cover

too many points, to present too wide a range of material. Where the lesson has a number of good teaching points, the temptation to take advantage of them all is great. Where the teacher does so, the lesson usually leaves a confusing impression on the class. In so brief a time as thirty or forty minutes only a few ideas can be presented to advantage. The best plan is to narrow the topic and concentrate upon a few important points.

Pictures and Exhibits

Values of pictures. Pictures and exhibits are particularly helpful in those lessons which are designed to portray the life of other times and other peoples than our own. Boys and girls will appreciate the characters of the men and women of Bible times better if they understand the conditions under which they lived. They will feel more closely acquainted with Mexicans and Japanese and Koreans and others of their brothers and sisters in foreign lands if they have seen pictures or models of their homes, their schools, their kites and balls, their clothes. Such materials help them to visualize situations which are quite different from their own. If used in connection with a talk or story, they increase its effectiveness many times. They appeal to all ages and are almost always well liked by Intermediates.

Since materials of this kind are often expensive, many teachers ask whether the expenditure of money involved is commensurate with the results obtained. This is a difficult question to answer. Local situations vary so greatly that what is practicable in one

case cannot be recommended in another. In counting the cost it is necessary to remember that if carefully preserved these materials may be used again and again. Thus the original investment may be made to yield results for a number of years. Nor is it necessary to make the total investment at one time. The teacher may make a modest beginning, adding something new to the collection each year. The interests of the pupils may be enlisted in building up a permanent exhibit or collection of materials which may be left with the teacher to be used later with other classes.

Motion picture machine. The question of the wisdom of providing a motion picture machine is also one in which teachers of Intermediates are interested. Many schools have machines. While the experience of such schools has been varied, the consensus seems to be that here the large investment involved is not justified by the results. This applies particularly to the use of the pictures as an aid to lesson study. There are so few Bible pictures produced, and among these so few that are good, that the machine is of very little value in this phase of the work. In addition to the scarcity of materials there is to be considered the cost of films, and the high insurance rates which the installation of a machine necessarily brings. All of which leads one to question the practicability of making the investment in those schools where money is a consideration. Unless the department budget be very large there will usually be many pieces of equipment more greatly needed than a motion-picture machine.

More than entertainment needed. In using pic-

tures or in putting on an exhibit or demonstration teachers must always be careful that teaching does not become mere entertainment. These materials lend interest to a lesson as well as increase its educational worth. The added interest is in itself a decided advantage, but it is unfortunate when the showing of pictures and other similar methods become nothing more than a bait to coax pupils into attending the church school. In selecting methods the first consideration should be the educational value and not the mere ability to draw pupils.

Story-Telling

An ancient method. Story-telling as a teaching method has the sanction of age. It was one of the earliest methods used in religious instruction. Jesus used it and in so doing he accommodated to his purposes the custom of his time. The Hebrews of the Old Testament used the method. The dramatic account of Job's experiences, the touching story of Ruth's loyalty to Naomi, the creation stories, all were a part of what we might call the curriculum of education of the time. But the method was not new even in the day when the Hebrew story of the creation first began to be related as men and women and children gathered around the evening camp fires. As far back as the dawn of history, in the early records of Egypt and Babylonia, and Assyria, we find stories manifestly designed for purposes of religious instruction.

Modern use of stories. After the invention of printing, particularly as the art of reading was acquired by the mass of the people and books began to

be widely circulated, the story-teller was not in so great demand as he had been in an earlier time. Many preferred reading to listening. A much greater amount of material could be covered in this way. So the story-teller's services were dispensed with except by the very young who could not read for themselves.

It is only recently that the story-teller has begun to be reinstated in anything like his old position of prominence. In late years the art of telling stories has been rediscovered. People have become conscious once more of the charm of the story-teller. Writers on the subject now insist that the method is adapted for use with all ages. They recommend it to teachers of Intermediates as well as to teachers of younger children. The recent emphasis upon story-telling has led many teachers to the conclusion that there is a foundation for the contention. But again it is necessary to warn against unwise enthusiasm. The method may not be used exclusively, nor even largely. The stories must be selected with care and the method of presentation modified, if the stories are to capture the interest of the early adolescent.

How to select stories for Intermediates. The first thing to consider in selecting a story to tell to a class of Intermediate pupils is its teaching value. The story-teller whose purpose is to entertain may choose any good story, but the story-teller who desires to teach must choose his story with reference to the needs of his pupils. Usually the story which the teacher incorporates into his lesson is one which bears directly upon the problems of his class.

The second question which a teacher of Intermediates will ask regarding a story before he decides to use it is, "Will it appeal to Intermediates?" Not all good stories do. If the teacher uses a story designed for older pupils, he is likely to lose the interest of his class. If he uses one designed for younger boys and girls, he is likely to bring upon himself the disapproval of his pupils. The story will not appeal if it is childish. On the other hand, the situation depicted and the experience presented must be such that the pupils can without difficulty understand them.

Further, a story does not usually commend itself to Intermediate pupils if it is not true to life. This does not rule out purely imaginative tales. A good story is not necessarily one that has happened, but it is one in which the action is such that it might have happened under the circumstances described. Intermediate boys or girls become very impatient when someone tells them a story in which virtue is rewarded and vice punished in a way in which they never are rewarded or punished in real life. They recognize the exaggeration in a story which attempts to demonstrate that truth pays by telling of some young person who confessed to a misdemeanor which he might have denied and was generously rewarded for his honesty. Boys and girls know that in many cases confession of guilt brings punishment, that self-sacrifice and honesty cost. This does not mean that they fail to appreciate the fact that virtue brings its own reward. They are thrilled with stories of heroism and courage. They can understand that Stephen found martyrdom worth while

and Paul gloried in persecution. But with the story which interprets life unfairly they have no patience. Perhaps this explains why true stories are usually so acceptable.

Anyone who has had any experience with Intermediate pupils knows that they like stories of action and adventure. One reason why so many of the girls read stories that were written for boys is that they contain more of adventure than do many of those designed for girls. If the adventure have an element of mystery in it, so much the better.

In selecting a story it is advisable to give some thought to its structure as well as to its content. Some stories are so weak in structure that they do not make the appeal they should. Perhaps the most important point to be observed is the way the story begins. If the story-teller fails in commanding the attention of the pupils at the beginning of his story, he will find it difficult to secure it later.

There are three types of introductions to stories, any one of which will challenge attention. One type of introduction is that which arouses curiosity because it contains an element of mystery. It makes the pupils wonder why such an unusual thing happened. Their curiosity is aroused. They listen eagerly for an explanation.

The second type is that which raises a problem. The good Samaritan story may be classed here, although the problem is not an integral part of the story. All through that story the audience is looking for the answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" In some stories at the very beginning the hero is in a quandary which makes the listener

ask, "What is the best thing to do under these circumstances?" Interest is keen because it is assumed that the answer will be revealed as the story unfolds.

The third type is that which begins with an arresting sort of action. Something happens that we cannot help paying attention to any more than we can keep ourselves from stopping to watch an interesting piece of machinery, or a battered-up automobile which tells of a wreck. In this group belongs the story that plunges at once into an adventure, a game, or a contest, and counts on our curiosity to hold us until we discover the outcome.

The interest aroused at the beginning of the story will hold the attention for some time but, it will not persist to the end unless there is something which compels it. A good story progresses by a series of steps to its climax when the mystery of the problem is solved or the action is terminated.

Nor will the story be satisfying if the climax is any less interesting than the earlier parts of it. The listener must not have the impression that the story has stopped, he must feel that the episode really is over.

How to tell a story. The story having been selected, there remains the task of telling it, and in this connection the word "task" is apt, for many teachers feel story-telling to be a burden. Perhaps the most important factor in transforming the telling of stories from a task into a privilege is practice. Usually skill in story-telling comes only after the continued telling of stories. But other elements enter in. The teacher must enjoy the stories himself, and he must know enough of the art of story-

telling to recognize his own mistakes and profit by them.

When preparing to tell a story many teachers follow the custom of reading the entire story through several times in order to become quite familiar with it. This is followed by a careful analysis of the story into its successive steps. Then comes the making of an outline which includes a brief summary of the action taking place in each main division of the story.

Then, unless the teacher wants to memorize the story, a method which usually results in a very artificial sort of performance, it is wise to become thoroughly familiar with the introductory sentences to each section and with any other particularly noteworthy sentences or words in it. If the story is well written, the introductory sentences will have been composed with care. Sometimes certain devices have been introduced into the story for the sake of rhythm or continuity. If so, they have probably been carefully worked over, and unless the teacher hopes to improve upon the story it is well that he attempt to reproduce these as faithfully as he can.

Next, the teacher must become thoroughly familiar with his outline. Some teachers find it possible to do this silently. Most of them, however, feel a need for verbal expression. Of these some can rehearse to an imaginary audience while others feel the need of real listeners. In any case it is important for the teacher not to try to tell the story to his class until he is confident of his ability to tell it freely without stumbling and with freedom of expression.

Discussion

Values of the discussion method. It is a generally accepted dictum that the discussion method is by far the most satisfactory for use with Intermediate pupils. Boys and girls usually enjoy a discussion. They welcome opportunity for self-expression. They enjoy the stimulation, which the method gives, to think for themselves. They are more interested in hearing what other boys and girls think about various topics which are discussed than they are in their teacher's ideas on these subjects.

It ought also to be said, however, that the number of times that the discussion method has been used unsuccessfully is so great that many teachers have long ago given it up as hopeless. They have found it difficult to maintain order during a discussion. They claim that discussions often degenerate into mere arguments, that the point of view of the pupils at the end of the discussion is practically the same as at the beginning, that little or nothing is really learned by this method.

Much of this difficulty is due to the fact that teachers have attempted to obtain results from the method for which it is not adapted. The discussion method is of very little value in helping pupils to become familiar with new material. Its possibilities lie in the direction of opening up new problems, and of helping pupils find solutions for some of the difficulties already before them. The discussion method is seen at its best when a group of boys or girls frankly and seriously considers such a question as whether or not it is right to play ball on Sunday.

The question appeals differently to various individuals in the group. What each speaker says helps someone else to see the problem in a little different light. As the discussion progresses many of the participants develop new attitudes toward it.

Misuse of the method could be avoided if teachers would adopt the plan of selecting their topic before deciding upon the method to be used. Many teachers are like one who remarked, when he discovered that the speaker who had promised to address his class was likely to disappoint him, "Oh, well, if we can't have a speech we will just have some sort of discussion." They decide they will have a discussion and then begin to look for a topic. If they find one that is suitable for discussion, so much the better. If they do not, they have the discussion anyway. The recent emphasis on the suitability of the method for use with early adolescents tempts many a teacher to follow this course of procedure. But success may not be expected unless one holds firmly to the rule of using the discussion method only when there is something that can be discussed with advantage.

How to conduct a discussion. Even where the topic is adapted to the method good results are not always secured. If a discussion is to be successful, it must be skillfully guided. This does not mean that the teacher may dominate the discussion. This would defeat its very purpose, which is to give the members of the group an opportunity to think a problem through together. But experience has demonstrated that there is a tendency for the different participants to digress from the subject before them and for the discussion to deteriorate

into a rather fruitless argument unless the leader steers it carefully to a logical conclusion.

One characteristic of a good discussion leader is the ability to make the discussion a group affair. There is a tendency for the traditional classroom attitude to creep in. Pupils feel that the discussion is a matter between the teacher and each one of them individually. They address their remarks to the teacher and not to the group. They pay little attention to the criticisms of the point of view which their fellow pupils make, responding only to the teacher's suggestions. The teacher should do all he can to build up the feeling of group consciousness. He should address as many of his remarks as possible to the group as a whole and should insist that all remarks by individual pupils be also addressed to the group and be expressed so that all can hear and understand. He should keep himself in the background as much as he can, participating in the discussion only enough to keep it going and to hold the pupils to the problem before them.

In every group there are some who are eager to participate and others who are more reticent. Perhaps these latter never will and should not be urged to participate as much as do those of a different temperament. But at least the more aggressive should not be permitted to monopolize the time at the disposal of the class. Every pupil should have an opportunity to speak if he so desires. Some may need to be encouraged to set forth their own point of view and to criticize the positions of the other members.

In most situations it is found advantageous to for-

mulate rules in regard to the way in which the discussion is to be conducted. A time limit for each speaker helps to solve the problem of keeping a few from monopolizing the time. Occasionally there is need for limiting also the number of times any individual may speak. If there is a tendency for several to speak at once it expedites matters to have it understood that no one may have the floor until after he has obtained the consent of the leader.

The leader must watch carefully that the pupils do not digress from the problem. If anyone introduces irrelevant material, he must draw attention to the fact that the speaking is not to the point. He must also see that the discussion leads to the formulation of conclusions, both on the part of individual pupils and of the class as a whole.

It is highly important that preparation for discussion be made in advance. Plans cannot be prepared that may be faithfully adhered to in every detail, but it is possible for the teacher to think about the various aspects of the problem which should be considered in the course of the discussion and even to have prepared in advance a number of questions which will open up the various aspects of the problem.

Another question to which attention should be given in advance is the method of getting the discussion started. A discussion will be rather flat and profitless unless the pupils really enter enthusiastically into it. The place to arouse enthusiasm is at the beginning. A discussion of abstract principles will not be likely to appeal to a group of Intermediate boys and girls as will a problem growing

out of a concrete situation. For this reason problems should be stated in concrete terms. Often it will be possible to present the problem in story form, having the pupils discuss whether the action or the point of view of the story character was right or wise.

Some teachers follow the practice of giving the boys and girls an opportunity to suggest problems for discussion. This helps to create interest. Boys and girls are often more enthusiastic about discussing a problem when it has been suggested by one of their number than they would have been if the idea had originated with the teacher. Often the problems which the pupils present have grown out of their own experience and thus present an almost ideal teaching situation.

Other teachers make individual pupils responsible for the leadership of class discussion. This is good training for those on whom the responsibility is placed, and often it is satisfactory in every way. But it is not always to be recommended. For much depends on the leader. If he is inefficient, the other members of the group benefit little from the discussion. The success of the plan depends upon how much experience the leader has had in participating in discussion groups and also upon the amount of supervision the teacher is able to give to the pupil leaders as they prepare for the task.

In conclusion, it must be repeated that no one of these methods can be regarded as suitable for all situations. All of them have possibilities. One method is adapted to the fulfillment of one kind of teaching purpose and another a different kind. Used

carefully to secure a type of result for which they are adapted, any one should help the teacher greatly to enrich the lives of his pupils.

For Further Study

1. Two teachers are engaged in an argument about the use of the discussion method with Intermediate pupils. One claims that it is the only method that will really work with early adolescent pupils, and the other insists that it is sure to make a class hard to discipline and that they never really learn anything from it anyway. What would you say to them if they appealed to you?

2. Make a plan for a discussion of the question of Sabbath observance, indicating the points you would expect to discuss, the order in which they would probably be taken up, and the method you would use for getting the discussion started.

3. Some teachers feel that there is a larger place for story-telling in the classes in religious education than in classes in history or civics because the materials used in religious education, particularly the biblical materials, are so difficult for the pupils to read appreciatively. What has been your experience in this matter?

4. Write out in detail any Bible story that you feel you would use with a class of Intermediate pupils, paying particular attention to the structure of the story.

5. From any textbook prepared for use with Intermediate pupils select three stories which you regard as well told and three which you feel require modi-

fication, indicating where and how you would like to change them.

References for Supplementary Reading

Method in Teaching Religion, Betts and Hawthorne, Chapters XIII, XVI.

Learning and Teaching, Sheridan and White, Chapters XVI, XVII.

Modern Methods in High School Teaching, Douglass, Chapters II, VI, VII.

Intermediate Method in the Church School, McKibben, pp. 141-156.

The Church's Program for Young People, Mayer, pp. 275-288.

The Project Principle in Religious Education, Shaver, Chapter IX.

Teaching the Youth of the Church, Maus, Chapters V-VIII.

CHAPTER IX

THE PUPIL AT WORK

THERE are two sides to the problem of special method. In addition to the question as to what the teacher may do to help the pupils learn there is that regarding the nature of the work to be assigned to the boys and girls themselves. This question arises whatever the age of the pupils. Assignments of work are made in the elementary as well as in the higher grades. But necessarily the work expected of young children is much simpler than what may be required of Intermediates. Although early adolescent boys and girls cannot do the grade of work which we expect of senior high-school students they can consult books and record their findings, formulate their conclusions, and express their reactions. Moreover, they enjoy such work. They seem to learn more easily when a part of the educational burden is put upon them. So it seems advisable that when early adolescence is reached there shall be a modification of teaching procedure in the direction of giving more difficult assignments and of placing greater responsibilities upon the pupils.

It is a fair criticism of our general practice to say that it is quite weak in this respect. Probably the majority of teachers of Intermediates require too little of their pupils. It is to be suspected that the chief cause of difficulty is that the teachers do not

know what kinds of work to require of the pupils nor how to make the assignments so interesting that the pupils will enjoy doing them.

Study

Faulty assignment. The truth of this assumption becomes clear when we examine that most common of all assignments of work, the direction, "Study the lesson for next Sunday." Although so persistently used this type of assignment practically never secures satisfactory results. Many of the boys and girls pay no attention to it whatever, and of those who do study the lesson few are able when the next Sunday comes to give an intelligent account of what they have studied. The explanation is not hard to find. In the first place the teacher who gives such an assignment appeals only to the least powerful incentives for getting the pupils to do the work. The pupils who obey his request do so in order that they may please him, or perhaps to satisfy a feeling that they ought to study their Sunday-school lesson, or even, in rare cases, in order to avoid a scolding or other unpleasant consequences. There is nothing in the assignment itself which will arouse expectations in the pupil's mind and make him want to do the work. With so many interesting things clamoring for the attention of the early adolescent one does not wonder that the admonition to study next Sunday's lesson so often goes unheeded.

Another criticism which may be made against this type of assignment is that it is too vague. This explains why those who try to carry out the teacher's

instructions so often receive little benefit from their work. The pupils, having nothing definite in mind, read over the material in a purposeless sort of way. They may or they may not notice the important points and they may or may not remember important details. If the material is not presented in a very striking way and if they are tired, or if a part of their attention is centered upon something apart from the lesson, they will skim over it quickly and carry away little that is of value.

Usually an indefinite assignment is evidence of lack of definiteness in the teacher's purpose. He gives the direction, "Study next Sunday's lesson," not because there is anything that he wants the pupils to accomplish, but because he feels they ought to be given some work to do. So he makes a general assignment, feeling sure that they will receive some benefit from it. The futility of such a course should be apparent. It would contribute greatly to the improvement of teaching if the principle were generally adopted that no assignments are to be made unless the teacher has a definite and defensible reason for making them.

Types of assignment. It will perhaps be well to recall at this point that study assignments may be of two general types according to the purpose to be accomplished. One type of assignment is that which aims to have the pupil discover and remember what the lesson says. This is the traditional sense in which the word "study" has been used. When a pupil can recall with a fair degree of accuracy the facts set forth in the textbook we are accustomed to say that he has "mastered" his lesson.

The other type of assignment is that which aims to have the pupil discover something which bears upon a certain question. Those who have this purpose in studying their lesson do not attempt to "master" all the facts. They focus their attention only upon those points which are pertinent to the matter at hand. They may have studied the material quite carefully and yet not be able to reproduce it.

There is little value in setting one of these purposes over against the other and attempting to argue which is the better. Comparison is quite beside the point. Sometimes one purpose is valid and sometimes the other, depending upon the teacher's conception of the needs of the pupils. If, for instance, the teacher's purpose is to get the pupils to become thoroughly familiar with the parables of Jesus, and this is a valid teaching aim under certain circumstances, then the pupils may quite properly study the good Samaritan story with a view to learning it in the sense of being able to reproduce it in their own words. On the other hand, if the teacher's purpose is, as Jesus' purpose was, to enable those who hear the story to answer the question, "Who is my neighbor?" then it does not matter so much whether they can retell the story as that they find the answer to the question and learn that anyone in distress is to be regarded as a neighbor.

Having decided what it is that he desires the pupils to accomplish, the teacher must be sure that his purpose is clearly and specifically indicated by the assignment. If it seems desirable that the pupils be able to reproduce all or a part of the material the teacher must say, "Study the lesson until you are

able to recall it accurately" or, "Memorize the story." If certain facts are to be discovered, the directions should indicate what they are as does the following assignment: "Read the next lesson and find out where David went when he fled from Saul's court, how he lived, and with whom he associated." Where a problem is to be solved the directions may be of the following type: "Read the next lesson and see if you can find an answer to the question, *Why is it wrong to tell a falsehood?*"

When making study assignments it is often advisable to give some suggestions as to the best way of doing the work. Many boys and girls do not know how to study. They have never learned how to analyze a piece of lesson material so as to pick out its essential points, how to summarize and organize what they have learned so that they can recall it easily and reproduce it accurately. For this reason they waste time. They work hard and accomplish little. They find study harder than it should be. They grow discouraged and learn less easily then than they did before. Pupils accomplish more and enjoy the work better if the teacher indicates how he would proceed if he were going to study the lesson.

Activities Which Supplement Study

Other types of activities. There are other kinds of assignments which may be given to Intermediate boys and girls. These include the drawing of pictures, the making of models and maps, the writing of essays, as well as the dramatization of stories and episodes and other kinds of oral expression. Before

discussing any of these methods of work in detail it will be well to consider the general problem of what is accomplished by such activities. The question is raised because some teachers seem to have confused these types of work with other activities and therefore expect from them results which they do not yield.

It will perhaps clarify the problem if we think in terms of a concrete case. Here is a teacher who at the close of a lesson on the good Samaritan story gives his pupils an opportunity to write in their notebooks a story about "A Modern Good Samaritan." This teacher feels that he is thus encouraging his class to "learn through doing." In one sense in which the phrase may be interpreted he is, but not in the sense in which it is commonly used. For there is obviously a distinction between what happens when a pupil learns to be sympathetic toward those who are in trouble by helping to carry an unfortunate teammate home on an improvised stretcher, and what happens when he writes a story putting the good Samaritan story in a modern setting. In both cases there is activity, and in both cases activity contributes to learning. But there is this difference between the two—that in the one case the pupil has an opportunity actually to try out a certain kind of conduct and in the other his work simply provides an opportunity to do some intensive thinking about it and see something of its implications. Because there is this fundamental difference it is advisable never to claim for the latter activity that it is an opportunity for learning by doing. For the very fact that it has been so described tempts the

teacher to substitute the doing of a piece of handwork or the writing of an essay for an actual experience in Christian living, a procedure which does much toward making education a profitless and artificial venture. Therefore it is advisable that the phrase "learning by doing" be not used as descriptive of such methods, but that their real nature as aids to thinking be clearly recognized and admitted.

Further, the teacher will use these aids to thinking intelligently only if he realizes something of the way in which this contribution is made. And before we can understand how the writing of an essay or the drawing of a map can help a boy or girl to receive more benefit from the study of lesson materials we must recall the distinction between the two types of purposes for which lesson study is undertaken. For these pieces of work may be used to supplement memory, or they may be used to supplement thinking, and the method in which they are used will be determined by the purpose which is to be accomplished.

As an illustration let us assume that we are teaching a course on the life of Jesus and that our purpose is to have the pupils become familiar with the material. If we wish to supplement the study of lesson material with other methods of work, we have a number of different courses open to us. We may have the pupils make an outline of the events in what authorities feel to be the most accurate chronological order. The outline may be given orally or it may be written out. Or the pupils may reproduce the stories in detail either orally or in written form. And whichever of these methods is used it will help

to fix the facts to be remembered in the memory of the pupils.

On the other hand, if our purpose is to have the pupils solve a problem or find the answer to such a question as, "What is the best way to spend Sunday?" our procedure will be quite different. We may assign an essay on what Jesus thought about Sabbath observance, or ask the pupils to comment or what some boy or girl did on Sunday—whether in their opinion this conduct was in harmony with the conduct of Jesus.

It is clear, then, that the purpose accomplished by an assignment is not always determined by the nature of the work assigned. The teacher may assign questions, for instance, the answering of which involves nothing more than a knowledge of what the textbook says, or he may ask questions which necessitate an application of principles. In the one case the work of the pupil may be said to be reproductive and in the other creative. Yet the physical activity involved in the working out of the assignment is the same. It is the mental activity which is significant and this is determined by the content and not by the form of the assignment.

Written work. Under the general caption, "Written Work," may be included the answering of questions, and the preparing of essays and reports. Little needs to be said in regard to the value of these activities except that the suggested general discussion may be applied to any one of them. Manifestly, any of them may be either reproductive or creative.

Usually teachers of Intermediates are interested not so much in the discussion of the values of

written work as in suggestions as to how to induce their pupils to do it. When the question of written work comes up at a conference there is usually someone who says: "I am convinced of its importance, but my boys [or my girls] don't like it. They say it is too much like day-school work and they won't do it, or they do it very poorly. Is there any way to get them to want to do it?"

Those who advocate the project method would find it easy to answer this question. They would say that if the course were made a pupil project, written work would commend itself to the boys and girls as being necessary to the completion of the project and the problem of inducing them to do it would be nonexistent. Those who do not care to adopt the project method outright may at least go part way with those who do use it in making the assignments as interesting as they possibly can. Intermediate boys and girls who will rebel at drawing up a list of conclusions may enjoy preparing a set of rules for the guidance of the department group. The use of initiative in the way in which the rules are to be phrased and set up may be encouraged. If the pupils do not care to keep the traditional kind of notebook, the teacher may procure instead inexpensive blank notebooks, allowing the pupils to decorate the cover and print across it the words, "My Diary," and the task of keeping notes may be transformed into a fascinating game. If the boys and girls find the writing of essays and reports irksome they may be allowed to impersonate the characters of the lesson stories and to prepare accounts of their experiences. The work may be varied

occasionally by having a class diary to which each member may make some contribution.

Manual work. Under the caption, "Manual Work," are included such types of work as the making of maps, the drawing of pictures, and the making of models. Map work is, of course, only reproductive. The making of maps helps the pupil to visualize the countries studied. He is more likely to notice their significant physical features and to remember them if he makes copies of the maps of the various countries than if he simply examines them.

Modeling and drawing, on the other hand, may be either reproductive or creative. The pupils may copy a model which someone else has made of a Palestinian village or make their own model. Similarly they may illustrate their notebooks with copies of good pictures or with original drawings. Because copied work often looks better than original pupil creations, opportunities for the latter kind of work are given altogether too rarely to Intermediates. The pupil may copy someone else's work in a mechanical sort of way but he cannot do an original piece of work without thinking about it. His own Palestinian village may not be so accurate or so artistic as it would have been if he had copied a model, but its educational value will be greater. Before making it he will have been forced to learn a great deal about the situation which he was attempting to depict.

Again teachers will want to know how much manual work may be expected of Intermediate pupils and how to make it interesting. Some find that Intermediate pupils do not enjoy the work, that

second- and particularly third-year Intermediates think it childish. Where this attitude exists there is need for caution. It is unwise to try to force the doing of a type of work which is distasteful. The desired results may be secured from written or oral work, and the manual arts may be entirely omitted from the program for Intermediates if this seems wise. Even where this attitude toward manual work is not general there is often great variation among the pupils of a single class in the matter of interest in and ability for such work. For this reason it may seem wise to use these methods only occasionally, or to allow different pupils to engage in different kinds of expressional work. This is well adapted to the plan of having a class notebook or diary, some pupils to be responsible for the written material and others for the illustrations and decorations.

Oral work. It is impossible to discuss oral work without repeating something of what has been said concerning written work. The pupil may either write his story or tell it, and he may either prepare a report and read it or he may present it in the form of a speech. In some classes oral work is not so popular as written work. Many boys and girls regard it as quite a task to stand up before their classmates and make speeches. Others, again, seem to enjoy it. The difference is often explained by the attitude of the week-day schools in the matter. Where these give good preparation in oral work pupils usually enjoy it and are quite ready to use their ability in their classes in the church school. The policy of the teacher in the church school will probably be decided largely by the attitude of the

pupils. If the pupils like oral work, it can be used extensively. In cases where it is not so popular it may still be used occasionally for variety and also for the training it gives. Ability to think on one's feet, to stand up before an audience with composure, is an important part of the Christian's equipment.

There is still another kind of oral work which has no parallel in written work. This is the debate. A debate may be a very excellent means of stimulating thought. It makes possible the presentation of several different points of view at the same time, and of the participation of several members of the class. It has the further advantage that it is usually regarded as an interesting exercise. A debate project has appealed to classes where all other attempts at stimulating interest failed. Perhaps the chief criticism that can be brought against the method is that it sometimes leads to undesirable rivalry between opposing sides.

Dramatization. As a classroom method dramatization needs no commendation to the modern teacher. In recent years it has been quite generally conceded to be an excellent method and has been widely used. In spite of, or perhaps because of, its wide adoption it is still important that teachers have their attention directed to what dramatization does and does not accomplish. For it is true in the case of dramatization as in the case of any other method of work which wins for itself a group of enthusiastic advocates that in many instances it is used unintelligently and with rather meager results.

It is impossible to evaluate dramatization as a classroom method without first recognizing that it may be reproductive or creative. In presenting a play which someone else has prepared a class simply reproduces faithfully what the author has written. This has values if the play is well chosen. A boy or girl who acts a part in a play is more familiar with the characters and the action than one who has simply read the story. That is to say, dramatization in such a case has much the same value as retelling the story. It supplies a motive for recalling the details, it necessitates concentration on points which are not clearly fixed in memory. It is indeed perhaps the most vivid means of recall that we have.

There are those who claim that dramatization does something more than this. They claim that in acting a part the pupil really "becomes the character." They mean by this that he does more than appreciate the character he is impersonating, that for the moment he actually identifies himself with that character, he feels as he is supposed to have felt and thinks as he thought. The contention is that this possibility of identifying oneself with the character impersonated puts dramatization on a distinctly higher plane than the other methods we have been discussing. For if the pupil really feels that he is another person then he actually experiences satisfaction or dissatisfaction at the conduct of the character which he is impersonating and this, of course, is a much stronger factor in habit formation than if he were quite aware that the experience was that of another.

Undoubtedly, there are boys and girls who seem

to lose consciousness of their own identity both in daydreams and in the acting out of stories which they have heard. It is a real question, however, whether this is altogether an advantage. Over against the point made above we must set this one. The young person who fancies himself another, suffering when he blunders and experiencing joy when his conduct is exemplary, is the one who is likely to permit his good impulses to work themselves out in dreams, and to allow these to supplant reality. For such an individual there should be a minimum of dramatics and a persistent emphasis on putting the lessons learned in the classroom into actual practice.

The other type of dramatization is that in which the pupils themselves write the drama. This has all the values of the use of a prepared drama and in addition the advantage that it compels the pupils to evaluate characters and action. They cannot write a play until they have decided what were the most important events and what were the outstanding characteristics of the people in the story. Because it has this value this method of dramatization should be used almost exclusively in classroom work.

Many who have had experience with the method feel that emphasis must be on the preparation of the work rather than on the final production if the best educational results are to be secured. With Intermediates it is often necessary to permit the giving of the play before an audience in order to enlist their co-operation in the enterprise. Where this is the case the teacher must hold rigidly before himself his

objective, which is the education of the pupils. It is easy to spend an altogether undue proportion of time on giving finish to the production.

In the second place educational ends are best served when characters are assigned on the basis of pupil need and not on the basis of ability. In one instance a boy was chosen to take the part of Scrooge in the *Christmas Carol,* not because he was a good actor, for he was not, but because he was trying to make himself think that he was indifferent to the finer things in life.

The Supervision of Pupil Work

Reasons for supervised study. The careful planning of assignments does much toward securing good results from pupil work, but it does not guarantee such results. Pupils sometimes misinterpret directions. They forget or deliberately neglect a part of the work assigned. The recognition of these difficulties has led in recent years to a revision of educational procedure. Whereas formerly assigned work was done at home, now it is often done in the schoolroom under the supervision of the teacher. This does not mean that the pupils are encouraged to be any less self-reliant than formerly, but simply that in case of need the teacher is at hand to guard against mistakes and waste of time.

The method has much to commend it to workers in religious education. Teachers in the church school have always had more difficulty in getting home work done than have teachers in the state schools. This has been almost inevitable in view of the crowded schedules of the boys and girls and also

because the lesson periods in religious education are so far apart that it is easy to forget that home assignments have been made.

Time for supervised study. The introduction of the method into the program of the church school necessitates certain adjustments. Either the Sunday period must be lengthened or a midweek period for study must be arranged for. The latter plan would fit very nicely into the programs of some churches where Wednesday night has come to be recognized as church night. In such cases at least a part of the evening might be set aside as a study period for the boys and girls. Where it is not feasible to devote some time during the week to this purpose it is nearly always possible to adapt the regular session of the church school so as to make room for a period of supervised study. Perhaps the simplest method is to use the time devoted formerly to closing exercises, extending it somewhat beyond the regular closing time, and thus securing from twenty to thirty minutes for the work. The program, then, provides for three distinct periods—a period of worship, a period of class work, and a period of study.

Method of supervision. Some suggestions as to the method of administering such work may be in order. The assignment will differ in no way from what would be made if it were to be done at home and not under the supervision of the teacher. The pupils will begin to write, or to read, as they would if no teacher were present. They will be free to consult each other if they do not disturb others who are working and if there is no reason why they should

not give or receive help. The work will differ from home study in this respect that the pupils will now be able to consult the teacher and that the teacher will be able to watch their progress, checking them if they are doing wrong and holding them to the work until it is complete.

For Further Study

1. A teacher who spent a great deal of time in directing his class of first year Intermediate boys in the making of a model of a Palestinian village defended his practice on the ground that good educational procedure required that there should be plenty of opportunity to "learn by doing." Do you consider his argument defensible? Give reasons for your answer.

2. Prepare assignments of work to be used in teaching to a group of Intermediate boys or girls, any three lessons taken from the Gospel of Mark.

3. Have you had any difficulty in the past in getting your pupils to do assigned work? Think about these experiences and determine, if you can, the cause of the difficulty. Could you solve your problem more satisfactorily now? What changes in procedure would you make?

4. What has been your experience with class dramatizations? Do you plan to use this method in the future more or less than you have done in the past? Give reasons for your plans in regard to this method, and state specifically what changes in procedure you intend to make?

5. From any course prepared for use with Inter-

mediate pupils select three lessons which are adapted for dramatization.

6. Suggest three subjects suitable for class debates with Intermediate pupils. What religious values would you expect the pupils to derive from participation in these debates?

7. Write a letter to a teacher who is about to assume responsibility for his first class of Intermediate pupils, advising him whether or not he should use the method of class debates.

8. Comment on the statement that pupils really become the characters they dramatize.

9. Prepare a study assignment for use with any lesson to be taught to Intermediate pupils.

10. To what extent have you attempted in the past to supervise the work of your pupils? What modification of your present program would be necessary to permit of adequate supervision?

References for Supplementary Reading

Method in Teaching Religion, Betts and Hawthorne, Chapters XIV, XV.

Modern Methods in High School Teaching, Douglass, Chapter IV.

The Dramatization of Bible Stories, Miller.

CHAPTER X

PREPARING TO TEACH

In a sense the title of this chapter might properly be given to any chapter in this book or, indeed, be used as a title for the book itself, for each chapter has dealt with some phase of this general problem. While it is true that some of the discussions have dealt with fundamental questions of educational theory, each has had as its ultimate aim the practical result of improvement of lesson plans. But the problem before us here is different from those that have been discussed in earlier chapters. Let us now consider the task that the teacher faces in making immediate preparation for the next meeting with the class group.

Lesson Planning

Beginning preparation. If it were possible to give only one suggestion to teachers in regard to lesson planning, probably the most valuable would be, "Begin sooner." If preparation is delayed until immediately before the class hour, it will almost material is needed that is not readily at hand, but certainly be unsatisfactory. It may develop that which would be easily procurable if there were more time. Eleventh-hour preparations do not permit the extra trip to the library or the additional reading or

inquiry that might increase greatly the value of the lesson period.

There is another and more important reason for beginning preparations well in advance of the class period. To yield its best results each piece of work should be a part of a larger teaching unit. To make this possible it is essential that there be something more than "lesson by lesson" planning. There must be careful planning of larger units of work if the teacher is to avoid wasteful duplication of material and disjointed and irregular teaching. We might, then, supplement the suggestion given above by saying, "Begin soon enough to make possible the planning of an entire series of lessons before teaching any one of them."

Selection of curriculum material. The planning of a series of lessons involves, of course, the selection of the curriculum material. Unfortunately, many teachers consider this a matter with which they have nothing to do. They assume that the determination of the course of study is entirely in the hands of the administrative officers. While of course the administrative officers have a responsibility for the curriculum as a whole, and it is unwise for a teacher to proceed to the selection of study material entirely without consideration of the school program, we need to remember the principle that we laid down early in this book that the important factor in every situation is always the needs of the pupils. Each teacher, therefore, has both a right and an obligation to have a share in the determination of the curriculum. Just how large a responsibility should be given to the teacher is a

matter of controversy among educators, but it seems clear that the widely prevalent policy of allowing the teacher no share is unwise. Unquestionably many of the difficulties of the classroom are due to unsuitable curriculum and changes might advantageously be made. Teachers will do well to familiarize themselves with the newer courses and textbooks that are now being prepared in large numbers by various publishers.

Reorganization of material. But however carefully the course is selected, there will usually, if not always, be need for modification to meet the special needs of individual groups and indeed of individual pupils. It will be well for the teacher at the beginning of the work of preparation to give careful consideration to the general plan and outline of the work. In some cases he will find it desirable to rearrange the whole material, making quite a different plan. Even if the plan is not better than that of the textbook it has the advantage of being his own and gains a certain freshness and vitality thereby.

It should be kept in mind that there are different possible plans for the same general material and that the approach of the textbook writer may not be the best for the particular class group. One writer may organize a course on the life of Jesus on a chronological basis. He will endeavor to put the events in their historical sequence. Another may organize it around topics or problems. Still another approach might be that of finding answers to a single large question such as "What is there in the life of Jesus that compels the reverence and loyalty

of the people of to-day?" Still another method might be the working out of such a practical project as the preparation of a pageant depicting some of the events in the life of Jesus.

Having determined at least provisionally on a general plan of approach, it will be necessary for the teacher to give attention to the task of breaking up the larger unit into smaller, more manageable parts. These subsections need not coincide exactly with the class periods. Often two or even more periods will be required for a single topic, and occasionally more than one topic may be covered in one session. While it is difficult to predict just how much time will be required for each topic, it is advisable to make plans as definitely as possible and to indicate in the preliminary outline just what is to be done at each class meeting.

In addition to modifications in the outline the teacher will probably find it advantageous to make some changes in content by way of addition, elimination, or rearrangement. Some of this work will have to be done as the course progresses, but a careful preliminary study of materials will be found advantageous.

Planning For the Class Period

Statement of aim. With the general plan carefully worked out the teacher is ready to make definite preparation for the individual class sessions. As in making the more general plans, here also the first question will be that of aim. Each unit of work should be part of the larger aim, but should have its own distinct purpose. This purpose should

be stated as clearly as possible. Most teachers find the writing out of the aim an indispensable aid in forcing themselves to be clear and specific. When the general outline has been carefully made the aims for the smaller units will have been prepared. But even here the teacher should make sure that the aims are definite and concrete before proceeding with the plans for the details of the lesson.

Mastery of materials. Further attention should also be given at this time to the materials of study. There is possibly a tendency in our day to underestimate the importance of thorough familiarity with the subject in hand. Formerly the only requirement of the teacher was knowledge of his materials. We know now that he needs also to give attention to his teaching method, but sometimes it appears that the importance of knowledge on the part of the teacher is quite forgotten. There is no substitute for a real mastery of the subject in hand.

Planning a class procedure. Along with attention to subject matter must come the planning of procedure for the class session. Here again plans are already partly made before work on the specific unit has been begun. The method of development is determined by the purpose to be accomplished. If the aim involves the acquiring of information by the pupils, the procedure must provide for bringing the facts to be learned to the attention of the class, seeing that the pupils understand them, and that they engage in certain types of activity which will help them to fix the desired information in memory. If, on the other hand, the purpose of the lesson is to have the pupils face and solve a problem, the plan

must provide for bringing the problem before the class, making available to the pupils such facts bearing on it as may seem necessary, and helping them to find a solution for it.

This does not mean, however, that any two teachers must handle the same unit of work in precisely the same way. A great deal of variety is possible in the working out of the various details. One teacher may simply state his problem in more or less abstract terms, while another may begin with a story which sets forth the problem in a more concrete way. One may plan for individual work on the assignment and another for group work. The only principle which can be laid down for the guidance of the teacher in the working out of such details is that he consider, in addition to the educational possibilities of the method, its probable appeal to his pupils.

Extent of the lesson plan. The question arises as to the amount of detail to be included in the lesson plan. Many teachers consider it advisable to put down on paper a fairly comprehensive outline both of content and procedure. They write out story outlines, leading questions, and specific directions for assignments. Others again indicate in their plans only the major steps to be followed.

The amount of detail it is advisable to include will vary with teachers and occasions. Elaborate lesson plans, if used constantly, may tend to stiffness and formalism in procedure. However, they promote also accuracy and coherence. Undoubtedly, there are teachers who expend an undue amount of time and labor on plan making, but there are far more whose teaching would be greatly improved by more

careful advance planning. Of course, the plan should be considered an aid rather than a taskmaster, and no hesitation should be felt in deviating from it when the needs of the class indicate that to be advantageous.

Evaluating the Work

Importance of self criticism. It is commonly supposed that skill in lesson planning develops with practice. This is so only if the teacher is able to see and to profit by his mistakes. The point was brought to the attention of a normal-school student who answered the criticism of his supervisor in these words: "Oh, your criticism makes me so discouraged. I know my lesson was a failure. I just wish I had the chance to go back and teach it all over again." To which the supervisor replied: "Don't waste any time in being discouraged. It is only natural that you should regret your mistakes. After twenty-five years of teaching I still come out of my classroom wishing that I had handled some part of the lesson differently. I hope you shall always feel so. As long as I do I shall know that I am growing. I hope you will always feel so too. Only don't let this feeling deteriorate into mere discouragement. Let it drive you into teaching a better lesson next time."

Evaluation of lessons. As yet no generally accepted method of evaluating a lesson has been worked out. The present emphasis on certain fundamental educational principles suggests some questions which may be applied to a lesson.

The first of these which we shall consider grows

out of the recent emphasis on the importance of pupil effort. Because effort is so essential to learning it seems fair to insist that a lesson be not classified as good unless it is possible to answer "Yes" to the question, "Were the pupils as well as the teacher at work?"

A second question, "Is the problem before the class a valid one, and do the pupils recognize its value?" goes back to the matter of aims. The futility of using topics which do not have a bearing upon the religious problems which pupils are facing day after day should be obvious. Yet we find all too many instances where the work is only remotely connected with daily living or where at least the connection is not apparent to the boys and girls.

A third question has to do with the use of the opportunities presented in the classroom for developing a desirable attitude toward each other. It is this, "Is the class a real social group?" Many apparently successful lessons fail at this point. Each individual works by and for himself alone and, while learning may result, a lesson cannot be regarded as satisfactory if the learning process teaches pupils to work against each other. One of the most important functions of the church school is to teach boys and girls to work with and for each other in a common enterprise.

In addition to these general questions there are also certain specific ones which may be applied to the details of the lesson. When a pupil has given an unsatisfactory response the teacher may ask himself, "Was my question not clear, or were my suggestions confusing?"

Of course, the best way to determine whether teaching is successful is to watch the conduct of the pupils and see whether desirable habits and attitudes are really being developed. But results such as these are difficult to locate and to measure. We do not always know what a pupil is thinking about, what motives are dominating him. We may not even be sure that we know how he acts. The conduct that we see may be quite satisfactory, but there may be other actions which we do not know about and which fall far below our standards.

To measure character accurately and fully is not by any means easy. In the past we have proceeded chiefly on the basis of opinion built up from more or less careful observation of the person in question. Investigators are now at work on the development of ways of measuring conduct that will be really scientific and dependable. It is to be hoped that we may soon have these measures for general use. In the meantime we can do much better than we have done in the past. Most of us could discover much more than we know now about the results of our work if we would give ourselves to the development of better contacts with our pupils. For teaching is, after all, living with people and trying to share experiences with them in such a way that desirable learnings will result.

For Further Study

1. State at least two reasons for working on the outline of the course before teaching any of the lessons.

2. Examine carefully the course of study which

you will probably use with your class of Intermediate pupils next year and indicate how it might be adapted better to meet the needs of the situation.

3. Examine carefully any two different courses which have been prepared for use with Intermediate boys and girls and discuss their relative values.

4. Outline a talk to be given to a group of teachers of Intermediate pupils on the topic, "Lesson Planning."

5. Make detailed lesson plans for any two lessons to be taught to a group of Intermediate pupils.

6. Indicate briefly the nature of your past procedure in the making of lesson plans. What do you consider its strong points? In what ways might it be improved?

References for Supplementary Reading

Method in Teaching Religion, Betts and Hawthorne, Chapter XI.

Learning and Teaching, Sheridan and White, Chapter X.

The Teacher, Weigle, Chapter I.

Modern Methods in High School Teaching, Douglass, Chapter III.

The Curriculum of Religious Education, Betts.

Intermediate Method in the Church School, McKibben, Chapter V.

The Project Principle in Religious Education, Shaver, Chapter VIII.

Teaching the Youth of the Church, Maus, Chapters II, III, IV.

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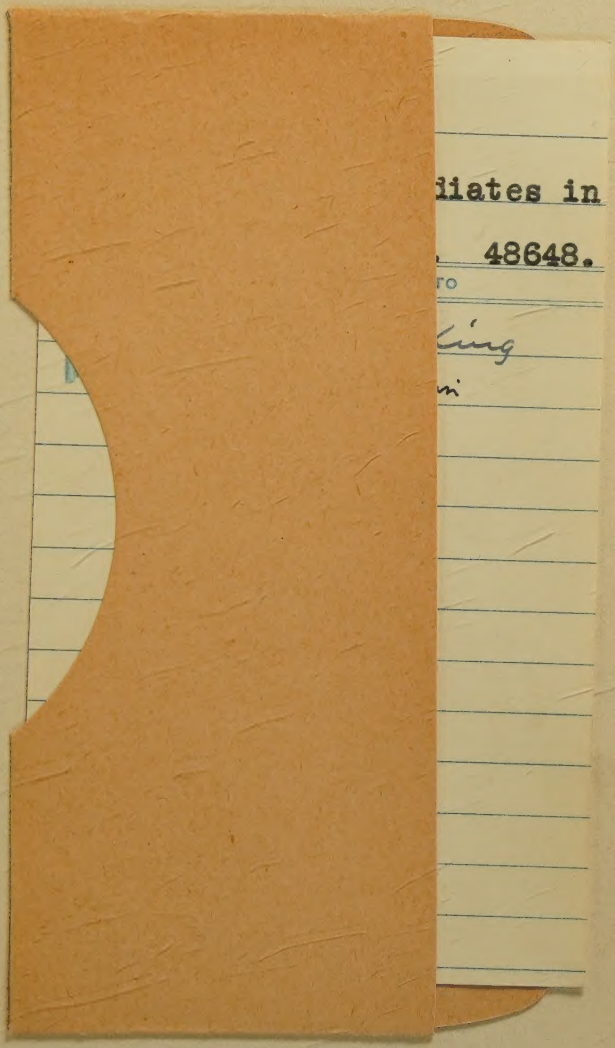
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